Table of Contents

Reuters Handbook of Journalism **1**

Standards and Values **2**
- Accuracy 3
- Independence 7
- Freedom from bias 11
- Integrity 17

Guide to Operations **23**
- Text 24
- Reporting and Writing Basics 25
- The Drill for Breaking News 32
- Other Common Story Forms 38
- The Desk 59
- Corrections, Refiles, Kills, Repeats and Embargoes 64
- Cracking the codes 78
- News Presentation 82
- Photos 93
- A Brief Guide to Standards, Photoshop and Captions 94
- Video 101
- A Brief Guide to the Standards and Values of Reuters Video News 102

The Reuters General Style Guide **106**
- A 107
- B 132
- C 152
- D 185
- E 202
- F 215
- G 230
- H 244
- I 257
- J 272
- K 277
- L 282
- M 296
- N 322
- O 332
- P 340
- Q 367
- R 370
- S 388
- T 412
- U 426
- V 433
- W 437
- XYZ 451

Table of Contents

Sports Style Guide **453**
A-Z guide to Reuters sports style 454
Cricket 464
Golf 467
Motor Racing 470
Soccer 473
Tennis 480
Winter Sports 482

Specialised Guidance **485**
The Essentials of Reuters sourcing 486
Personal investments by Reuters journalists 500
Legal dangers and legal support 505
Reporting about people 520
Dealing with stringers 524
Dealing with threats, dangerous situations and incidents involving Reuters or its staff 526
Dealing with complaints 531
Attention Editor items and Hoaxes 534
Reporting from the internet 539

Reuters Handbook of Journalism

Everything we do as Reuters journalists has to be independent, free from bias and executed with the utmost integrity. These are our core values and stem from the Reuters Trust Principles. As a real-time, competitive news service whose reputation rests on reliability, we also value accuracy, speed and exclusivity. The way in which we, as Reuters employees, live these values is governed by the Reuters Code of Conduct. That code, with a few notable exceptions that apply specifically to journalists, governs the behaviour of all Reuters employees and is essential reading. As journalists, however, we have additional responsibilities if we are to fulfil the highest aspirations of our profession - to search for and report the truth, fairly, honestly and unfailingly.

This handbook is not intended as a collection of "rules". Beyond the obvious, such as the cardinal sin of plagiarism, the dishonesty of fabrication or the immorality of bribe-taking, journalism is a profession that has to be governed by ethical guiding principles rather than by rigid rules. The former liberate, and lead to better journalism. The latter constrain, and restrict our ability to operate. What follows is an attempt to map out those principles, as guidance to taking decisions and adopting behaviours that are in the best interests of Reuters, our shareholders, our customers, our contacts, our readers and our profession.

The handbook, now in its second online edition and fully revised, is the work of no one individual. Dozens of journalists from text, television, pictures and from domestic as well as international services, have worked to bring it up to date. It builds on the work of colleagues, too many to number over the past 150 years, whose commitment to the most ethical standards of our profession has made Reuters the outstanding news organisation it is today.

April 2008

This page was last modified 22:54, 24 November 2009.

Standards and Values

What Makes a Reuters Journalist?

There are many different types of journalism practised in Reuters, across text, television, picture services and online. No one definition of our craft applies to them all. What must unite us is honesty and integrity. We often face difficult choices in the pursuit of better stories and superior images. In such situations there are several "right" answers and the rules we use run out. We can, however, guard against damage to our reputation through a shared understanding of the fundamental principles that govern our work.

The 10 Absolutes of Reuters Journalism

- Always hold accuracy sacrosanct
- Always correct an error openly
- Always strive for balance and freedom from bias
- Always reveal a conflict of interest to a manager
- Always respect privileged information
- Always protect their sources from the authorities
- Always guard against putting their opinion in a news story
- Never fabricate or plagiarise
- Never alter a still or moving image beyond the requirements of normal image enhancement
- Never pay for a story and never accept a bribe

This page was last modified 15:30, 14 February 2012.

Accuracy

Accuracy is at the heart of what we do. It is our job to get it first but it is above all our job to get it right. Accuracy, as well as balance, always takes precedence over speed.

Contents

- 1 Corrections
- 2 Sourcing
- 3 Quotes
- 4 Reflecting reality
- 5 Datelines and bylines
- 6 Attribution
- 7 Reporting rumours
- 8 Graphic images and obscenities

Corrections

Reuters is transparent about errors. We rectify them promptly and clearly, whether in a story, a caption, a graphic or a script. We do not disguise or bury corrections in subsequent leads or stories. Our Corrections Policy is outlined in this Handbook.

Sourcing

Accuracy entails honesty in sourcing. Our reputation for that accuracy, and for freedom from bias, rests on the credibility of our sources. A Reuters journalist or camera is always the best source on a witnessed event. A named source is always preferable to an unnamed source. We should never deliberately mislead in our sourcing, quote a source saying one thing on the record and something contradictory on background, or cite sources in the plural when we have only one. Anonymous sources are the weakest sources. All journalists should be familiar with the detailed guidance in The Essentials of Reuters sourcing.

Here are some handy tips:

- Use named sources wherever possible because they are responsible for the information they provide, even though we remain liable for accuracy, balance and legal dangers. Press your sources to go on the record.
- Reuters will use unnamed sources where necessary when they provide information of market or public interest that is not available on the record. We alone are responsible for the accuracy of such information.
- When talking to sources, always make sure the ground rules are clear. Take notes and record interviews.
- Cross-check information wherever possible. Two or more sources are better than one. In assessing information from unnamed sources, weigh the source's track record, position and motive. Use your common sense. If it sounds wrong, check further.
- Talk to sources on all sides of a deal, dispute, negotiation or conflict.

- Be honest in sourcing and in obtaining information. Give as much context and detail as you can about sources, whether named or anonymous, to authenticate information they provide. Be explicit about what you don't know.
- Reuters will publish news from a single, anonymous source in exceptional cases, when it is credible information from a trusted source with direct knowledge of the situation. Single-source stories are subject to a special authorisation procedure.
- A source's compact is with Reuters, not with the reporter. If asked on legitimate editorial grounds, you are expected to disclose your source to your supervisor. Protecting the confidentiality of sources, by both the reporter and supervisor, is paramount.
- When doing initiative reporting, try to disprove as well as prove your story.
- Accuracy always comes first. It's better to be late than wrong. Before pushing the button, think how you would withstand a challenge or a denial.
- Know your sources well. Consider carefully if the person you are communicating with is an imposter. Sources can provide information by whatever means available - telephone, in person, email, instant messaging, text message. But be aware that any communication can be interfered with.
- Reuters will stand by a reporter who has followed the sourcing guidelines and the proper approval procedures.

Quotes

Quotes are sacrosanct. They must never be altered other than to delete a redundant word or clause, and then only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote in any way. Selective use of quotes can be unbalanced. Be sure that quotes you use are representative of what the speaker is saying and that you describe body language (a smile or a wink) that may affect the sense of what is being reported. When quoting an individual always give the context or circumstances of the quote.

It is not our job to make people look good by cleaning up inelegant turns of phrase, nor is it our job to expose them to ridicule by running such quotes. In most cases, this dilemma can be resolved by paraphrase and reported speech. Where it cannot, reporters should consult a more senior journalist to discuss whether the quote can be run verbatim. Correcting a grammatical error in a quote may be valid, but rewording an entire phrase is not. When translating quotes from one language into another, we should do so in an idiomatic way rather than with pedantic literalness. Care must be taken to ensure that the tone of the translation is equivalent to the tone of the original. Beware of translating quotes in newspaper pickups back into the original language of the source. If a French politician gives an interview to an American newspaper, it is almost certain that the translation back into French will be wrong and in some cases the quote could be very different. In such cases, the fewer quotes and the more reported speech, the better.

Reflecting reality

Accuracy means that our images and stories must reflect reality. It can be tempting for journalists to "hype" or sensationalise material, skewing the reality of the situation or misleading the reader or viewer into assumptions and impressions that are wrong and potentially harmful. A "flood" of immigrants, for example, may in reality be a relatively small number of people just as a "surge" in a stock price may be a quite modest rise. Stopping to think, and to discuss, how we use words leads

to more precise journalism and also minimises the potential for harm. Similarly, no actions in visual journalism should be taken that add to or detract from the reality of images. In some circumstances, this may constitute fabrication and can cause serious damage to our reputation. Such actions may lead to disciplinary measures, including dismissal.

Datelines and bylines

Accuracy is paramount in our use of datelines and bylines. Readers assume that the byline shows the writer was at the dateline. We should byline stories only from datelines where the writer (or the reporter being written up on a desk) was present. We may only use datelines where we have staff or freelancers on the spot from text, photos or TV and we are getting information from them on the ground. Reporters or freelancers who have contributed to a report should be included in an additional reporting line at the end of the story, giving their name and location.

Attribution

Accuracy means proper attribution to the source of material that is not ours, whether in a story, a photograph or moving images. Our customers and the public rely on us to be honest about where material has originated. It allows them to assess the reliability.

It is insufficient simply to label video or a photograph as "handout". We should clearly identify the source - for example "Greenpeace Video" or "U.S. Army Photo". Similarly, it is essential for transparency that material we did not gather ourselves is clearly attributed in stories to the source, including when that source is a rival organisation. Failure to do so may open us to charges of plagiarism.

Reporting rumours

Reuters aims to report the facts, not rumours. Clients rely on us to differentiate between fact and rumour and our reputation rests partly on that. There are times when rumours affect financial markets and we have a duty to tell readers why a market is moving and to try to track down the rumour - to verify it or knock it down. There may be exceptional circumstances when a market is moving so rapidly and so violently that we move a story before being able to verify or knock down the rumour. Full guidance on how to handle rumours is in The Essentials of Reuters sourcing.

Graphic images and obscenities

In the course of our work, we witness and record scenes of a violent or sexually graphic nature. As journalists, we have an obligation to convey the reality of what we report accurately, yet a duty to be aware that such material can cause distress, damage the dignity of the individuals concerned or even in some cases so overpower the viewer or reader that a rational understanding of the facts is impaired. We do not sanitise violence, bowdlerise speech or euphemise sex. We should not, however, publish graphic images and details or obscene language gratuitously or with an intention to titillate or to shock. There must be a valid news reason for running such material and it will usually require a decision by a senior editor. In all cases, we need to consider whether the material is necessary to an understanding of the reality portrayed or described. We should also be mindful

that our customers in different markets often have different thresholds and needs. Graphic material which we might send to our wholesale broadcast clients may not be suitable for use online in our consumer business, just as a sexually explicit photograph may be more acceptable in one part of the world than another.

Further guidance on dealing with graphic images can be found in the Photos and Video sections of this Handbook. Writers should consult the Style Guide entry on obscenities for guidance on how to handle offensive language. Stories that contain such language must be sent ATTENTION EDITOR.

Category: Standards and Values

This page was last modified 10:19, 1 October 2008.

Independence

Independence is the essence of our reputation as a "stateless" global news organisation and fundamental to the trust that allows us to report impartially from all sides of a conflict or dispute. It is crucial to our ability to report on companies, institutions and individuals in the financial markets, many of whom are also our customers, without regard for anything other than accuracy, balance and the truth. Our independence stems not only from the structure of Reuters but also from our duty as journalists to avoid conflicts of interest or situations that could give rise to a perception of a conflict. What follows is not an exhaustive list of conflicts that might arise. If you think that there is a potential for conflict in any of your activities you should raise this with your manager.

Contents

- 1 Personal Investments
- 2 Declaring financial interests
- 3 Work outside Reuters
- 4 Checking back with sources
- 5 Gifts and entertainment
- 6 Travel and accommodation
- 7 Bribes and other inducements
- 8 Independence Within Reuters
- 9 Entering competitions and receiving awards

Personal Investments

You must not allow any investments held by you or your immediate family to influence you in your work for Reuters. Except under any arrangements made for employees by Reuters, you must not use any of Reuters transaction or communications facilities for your own - or any other individual's - personal investment purposes. This does not apply to use of a Reuters product which is directed to the consumer market.

Declaring financial interests

Whether you are reporting news, financial information or other subjects you should ensure that no circumstances exist which could give rise to a suspicion of bias on the part of Reuters. The section in the Reuters Code of Conduct that deals with personal investments reflects the standard acceptable at the time the Code was written. The changing industry and regulatory environments make it clear that we need to hold ourselves to a higher standard in order to protect and grow the reputation of Reuters for accurate, unbiased journalism. That standard applies to all journalists in editorial and supplements the Code, which should be read in conjunction with it. The standard is detailed in the section of this Handbook Personal investments by Reuters journalists. Failure to adhere to the standard will be subject to the disciplinary procedures in force in the location where any infraction occurs.

Work outside Reuters

You may not engage in paid work outside Reuters unless your manager has given you permission in advance. This would include, for example, writing a book or articles, addressing a conference or commercial or news photography. Permission will be routinely granted if the activities do not affect Reuters. (Guild members in the United States are not required to seek permission to take a second job unless it could be considered in competition with Reuters).

Checking back with sources

Reuters never submits stories, scripts or images to sources to vet before publication. This breaches our independence. We may, of our own volition, check back with a source to verify a quote or to satisfy ourselves about the reliability of factual information but we also need to ensure that in doing so we do not give sources an opportunity to retract or materially alter a quote or information to their advantage.

Interview subjects or their organisations or companies sometimes ask to see the quotes we plan to publish or broadcast before they are issued. We should resist such requests where possible. If we do have to submit quotes for approval, we should not agree to a quote being materially changed. It is often effective to give the source a tight deadline for approval.

Gifts and entertainment

The Reuters Reuters Code of Conduct reminds journalists that they must not accept any payment, gift, service or benefit (whether in cash or in kind) offered by a news source or contact. In some societies it is traditional to offer or receive gifts on special occasions, such as secular or religious holidays. To refuse such a gift may cause offence and in weighing what to do, a journalist must be mindful of a society's culture and traditions. A good test of whether to accept the gift or politely decline is the value of the item. A traditional gift of purely nominal value may be appropriate to accept. A gift of more than nominal value should be declined, using an explanation of our policies. If a gift of some value proves impossible to decline, it should be surrendered to the journalist's manager for donation to a suitable charity. If you cannot decide whether the gift is of greater than nominal value, assume that it is. Staff in any doubt about how to behave should discuss the appropriate action with their manager.

In the course of gathering news, journalists are often invited to breakfasts, luncheons or dinners. As long as such occasions are newsworthy, it may be appropriate to accept the hospitality provided it is within reason. We do not accept "junkets" - events that have little if any value to our newsgathering such as an invitation to a free holiday, an evening's entertainment or a sporting event at the expense of a news source. Accepting such hospitality when there is no news value might well be seen to create an unreasonable obligation to the source. Reuters has a company-wide policy on bribery, corruption, gifts and entertainment which also applies to journalists and is accessible via the corporate Reuters Policy Gateway.

Travel and accommodation

News sources, often companies, will sometimes offer journalists free transport or accommodation to get to cover a story. Our standard position is that we pay our own way and make our own travel arrangements. If that is impractical or will restrict access to sources, you must consult your manager about the offer. Permission will normally be given only if the story warrants coverage and to insist on paying would be impractical. In this case, a donation equivalent to the costs Reuters would have incurred should be made to a suitable charity and the donation logged.

In exceptional circumstances, it may be impossible to get to the news without accepting free travel or accommodation. Such cases might include flying to a remote location to cover a famine story with an aid organisation, taking a military flight to a war zone or interviewing a company CEO on a private jet. Again, journalists must obtain permission from their manager to proceed. The manager needs to weigh such factors as access, newsworthiness and the potential for a conflict (what if there is no story out of the trip?) and may need to escalate.

Bribes and other inducements

Under no circumstances should we take or offer payment (whether in cash or in kind) for a news story. Such action is a grave breach of our ethics, undermines our independence and can lead to disciplinary action including dismissal. Journalists also need to weigh how they entertain sources. We clearly need to take sources out for a meal or out for a drink in pursuit of the news and encourage our journalists to do so. Such entertainment, however, should not go beyond the bounds of normal, basic hospitality and needs to be in line with the Reuters policy on bribery, corruption, gifts and entertainment.

Reuters does not use gifts of value, in cash or in kind, to influence sources. In most countries, government officials (and officers of state-owned enterprises) are also restricted in the benefits they can accept for performing their duties, including non-cash benefits. Making an improper offer can also subject Reuters and its employees to fines or imprisonment. Journalists must inform themselves of the relevant restrictions before offering a gift of even nominal worth and seek approval from their manager.

Limited potential exceptions exist to the Reuters policy prohibiting the offering or making of payments or inducements, including to government officials. These exceptions will apply only in very narrow circumstances, such as risk to life and limb or facilitating payments made simply to speed up a legal or administrative process. Such payments should generally be small and must be accurately identified in expense reports and other records. Journalists should seek approval from their manager, who should escalate as necessary and report any approved payments to the Reuters Area General Counsel, unless circumstances require an on-the-spot decision, in which case the journalist should act within the spirit of these guidelines.

Independence Within Reuters

The Reuters Trust Principles and the Board of Trustees exist to guarantee the independence of Reuters and also the editorial independence of journalists within Reuters. We do not write stories, take photographs or film events to help clinch a sales contract or alter our coverage of a company, government or institution to suit Reuters commercial interests. The company does not expect this of

its editorial staff. It expects us to apply sound news judgment and to produce stories and images that are accurate, fair and balanced. If a colleague from outside editorial raises an issue with a story or image and makes a reasoned argument that it is unbalanced or incorrect, then we have a clear duty to examine the complaint.

Entering competitions and receiving awards

Reuters encourages its employees to submit outstanding work, whether text, visual or graphics, for awards for excellence in journalism from reputable, disinterested sources. Care must be taken to ensure that such action does not come into conflict with the Trust Principles or departmental guidelines. Employees may submit journalistic work produced for Reuters for an award with the approval of their manager. Unsolicited awards need similar approval before they can be accepted, as do invitations to sit on a competition jury as a Reuters journalist. No work for Reuters, whether text, visual or graphics, should be produced primarily for submission for an award, nor should it be altered, except to conform to the rules of the competition (e.g. submitted as a Word document).

Employees will normally be given approval to submit work produced for Reuters for awards, including monetary awards, from reputable professional bodies in the news, photographic, television and graphics industries or to sit on the jury for such awards. Approval will not be granted to enter work for awards from companies, institutions, lobby groups, governments, political parties or associations and advocacy groups whose criteria are self-serving or whose aim in granting the award could be construed as an attempt to influence the impartiality and tenor of the recipient's work or Reuters coverage.

Any unsolicited award for work done for Reuters should be reported immediately by the intended recipient to a manager, who should consider the matter in the spirit of these principles. Sympathetic consideration will be given to unsolicited awards from reputable media rights groups or from official institutions that recognise a journalist's contribution to civil society in a way that cannot be construed as self-serving.

Category: Standards and Values

This page was last modified 12:32, 21 September 2009.

Freedom from bias

Reuters would not be Reuters without freedom from bias. We are a "stateless" news service that welcomes diversity into our newsrooms but asks all staff to park their nationality and politics at the door. This neutrality is a hallmark of our news brand and allows us to work on all sides of an issue, conflict or dispute without any agenda other than accurate, fair reporting. Our customers and our sources value Reuters for that quality and it is one we all must work to preserve.

Contents

- 1 Take no side, tell all sides
- 2 Opinion and Analysis
- 3 Discriminatory language and stereotypes
- 4 Investment advice
- 5 Reporting on Reuters
- 6 Political and Community Activity
- 7 Equal Opportunity in the Newsroom
- 8 Diversity in the Newsroom
- 9 Media Interviews and Speaking Engagements

Take no side, tell all sides

As Reuters journalists, we never identify with any side in an issue, a conflict or a dispute. Our text and visual stories need to reflect all sides, not just one. This leads to better journalism because it requires us to stop at each stage of newsgathering and ask ourselves "What do I know?" and "What do I need to know?" In reporting a takeover bid, for example, it should be obvious that the target company must be given an opportunity to state their position. Similarly in a political dispute or military conflict, there are always at least two sides to consider and we risk being perceived as biased if we fail to give adequate space to the various parties.

This objectivity does not always come down to giving equal space to all sides. The perpetrator of an atrocity or the leader of a fringe political group arguably warrants less space than the victims or mainstream political parties. We must, however, always strive to be scrupulously fair and balanced. Allegations should not be portrayed as fact; charges should not be conveyed as a sign of guilt. We have a duty of fairness to give the subjects of such stories the opportunity to put their side.

We must also be on guard against bias in our choice of words. Words like "claimed" or "according to" can suggest we doubt what is being said. Words like "fears" or "hopes" might suggest we are taking sides. Verbs like rebut or refute (which means to disprove) or like fail (as in failed to comment) can imply an editorial judgment and are best avoided. Thinking about language can only improve our writing and our journalism.

Opinion and Analysis

Reuters makes a fundamental distinction between our factual news stories and clearly-labelled opinion pieces.

Reuters journalists do not express their opinions in news stories, voiced video or scripts, or on blogs or chat rooms they may contribute to in the course of their work. This fundamental principle has generated huge trust in Reuters among customers and the public over many years. It holds true for all the types of news that Reuters covers, whether financial or general and in any language or form.

This is not to say that other people's opinions have no place in our stories. They are very often relevant to the story and are essential for the reader or viewer to understand its meaning and consequences. For that to hold true, quoted opinion must be authoritative and be attributed to a named source. We risk biased reporting if we allow an unnamed source to say, for example, "I believe Company X is on the path to strong revenue growth and see its stock rising by 20 per cent over the next six months." We have no protection in such a case against the charge that we are working in the interests of unnamed sources to talk up a stock that their firms may have a substantial interest in. We do enjoy that protection if we write: "I believe Company X is on the path to strong revenue growth and see its stock rising by 20 per cent over next six months," said Joe Mo, a senior equities analyst at Manchuk Fund Manager which holds 7.3 per cent of the company's share capital.

In our columns and in certain other distinct services we may create, we do allow named authors to express a point of view. We will always clearly label these pieces as being distinct from the factual news file and we will publish disclaimers that say the work does not represent the opinions of Reuters. Those journalists who are allowed to publish "point of view" pieces like columns will express solidly-grounded views in their areas of expertise and will not simply provoke with ungrounded assertions or personal attacks . For more on columnists see the section Columns.

It is the responsibility of senior editors to ensure that we publish a variety of views by aggregating the work of others, by commissioning guest contributions, by encouraging engagement by our audiences in different forms and by reflecting the multiplicity of human perspectives across a varied and diverse news file.

Analysis is a valued part of our news file and should not be confused with items like Columns. Whether in spot copy or as a stand-alone item tagged ANALYSIS, we provide valued insight into events or issues and cast light on them from a new angle without compromising our standards of impartiality or commitment to fairness. The writer's professional judgment has a large part to play in good analysis though we must take care not to stray into the realm of opinion. Good analysis is supported by the established facts or available data and rests on the use of named sources and the writer's expertise. Analysis need not reflect the consensus view; indeed some of the best analysis may challenge that view. A story that takes the ANALYSIS tag may also be appropriate for an informative, in-depth look at an issue of interest to a specialist readership, without necessarily needing a spot hook for the story.

Discriminatory language and stereotypes

We must avoid inappropriate references to gender, ethnicity, religion, culture, appearance, age, and sexual orientation. When a story relies on such references, we should ask if it is a Reuters story at all. A Reuters journalist must be sensitive to unconscious stereotyping and dated assumptions. Is it really novel that the person in the news is black, blonde, female, overweight or gay? If it is relevant, does the fact belong in the lead or should it be woven in lower down? Our language should be neutral and natural. When referring to professional groups, plural expressions such as executives and journalists are preferable to gender-specific tags that imply the exclusion of women. We should avoid artificial words such as "spokesperson" when describing a role. We should avoid gratuitous references to appearance or attire, while recognising the situations when these details are relevant. Reporters must resist the assumption that their cultural values, religious beliefs or social mores are the norm. We should also be suspicious of country stereotypes - the usually negative notions about a national character. These can be offensive. References to country stereotypes may be valid in certain well-balanced stories, but we should always proceed with caution, even when seeking to challenge or subvert a preconception. Fuller guidance can be found in the section of this Handbook Reporting about people.

Investment advice

You must not express a personal view in reports on the merits of a particular investment. Reports containing value judgments on investments must be sourced to a named third party. Local laws also impact on our reporting. Reuters reports news. It does not give investment advice and in many countries is prohibited from doing so by law. Reuters journalists should also not give investment advice to customers and/or readers who solicit such advice by any means including telephone, letter, fax or e-mail.

Reporting on Reuters

You must take extreme care to avoid any hint of bias when reporting on the Reuters Group, ensuring that reports are factually based. We need some special rules on reporting Reuters as a company, so we are not seen as talking the company's shares up or down. A Reuters story about Reuters is perceived by stock markets and market regulators as the official line on the company. When reporting on Reuters subsidiaries or quoting officials and analysts from Reuters subsidiaries it must be stated that these are Reuters companies. Here is how to report on Reuters or a majority-owned subsidiary:

- As a rule, we do not produce initiative reporting of Reuters.
- Any story about Reuters must be marked ATTENTION EDITOR and seen by a regional specialist editor or deputy before transmission.
- Always seek comment from a company spokesman. One should always be available in London or New York.
- No story about Reuters may contain a quote from an unnamed source.

- Any pick-up of a story about Reuters from other media must be marked ATTENTION EDITOR and seen by a regional specialist editor or deputy before transmission. Always seek comment from a company spokesman.
- As with all other pick-ups, we should pick up only stories which are likely to be market-moving or of significant general interest.

Political and Community Activity

Reuters does not give support - directly or indirectly - to any political party or group nor does it take sides in national or international conflicts or disputes in accordance with our Code of Conduct. In keeping with this policy you must not identify the Reuters name with any political party or group or any one side in such conflicts or disputes.

Displays of political affiliation or support for partisan causes have no place in our newsrooms. No member of editorial, whether a journalist or support worker, may wear campaign buttons, badges or items of clothing bearing political slogans on the job, nor bring posters, pamphlets and other political material to the workplace to distribute or display.

Outside work, Reuters respects the right (and in some countries the obligation) of staff to vote in elections and referendums and does not seek to interfere with that right. The company also recognises that staff enjoy certain fundamental freedoms as a result of their nationality or where they live. Reuters, however, expects journalistic staff in all branches of editorial to be keenly sensitive to the risk that their activities outside work may open their impartiality to questioning or create a perception of bias.

Such perceptions can undermine the integrity not only of the individual but of all journalists at Reuters and damage the company's reputation. In some societies, individuals who sign petitions or join demonstrations may be monitored by the authorities and evidence could be used to damage their reputation or restrict our newsgathering operations. In other countries, individuals who contribute to political campaign funds have their names on the public record. Again, such evidence may be used by those who would seek to undermine the good name of Reuters, its staff or our profession. A policy designed to protect our standing as a news service free from bias cannot be policed. It relies on trust and an expectation that staff will refrain from activities that might, whatever the intention, raise perceptions of a conflict and that they will consult their manager in any case of doubt. Where such perceptions of a conflict do arise, Reuters may in some cases ultimately require the journalist to move to other duties. Individuals should use their common sense, The Trust Principles and the values of unbiased journalism in deciding whether to donate to certain charitable causes or be active in the affairs of their community. A conflict is unlikely to arise but staff in any doubt should consult their manager. The same principles apply to any doubts about a possible perception of conflict that may arise from the activities of a close family member.

Equal Opportunity in the Newsroom

Reuters is committed to treating its employees fairly, regardless of gender, ethnic, national or religious background, age, disability, marital status, parental status or sexual orientation. Qualified employees will be given consideration for all job openings regardless of any of the above. The

selection of employees included for entry to the company, for training, development and promotion should be determined solely on their skills, abilities and other requirements which are relevant to the job and in accordance with the laws in the country concerned.

Diversity in the Newsroom

Reuters recognises, values and encourages a diverse employment mix. In addition to gender and ethnic origin, the company considers a wide range of backgrounds in terms of experience and knowledge as part of its recruitment and employee development policies. While politics has no place in our newsrooms, diversity does. We welcome the varying perspectives, insights and considerations that diversity of gender, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, upbringing, age, marital or parental status, customs and culture bring to the debate about the news we gather. Diversity enriches what we do and there is a place for everyone in the discussion and the exchange of ideas that lead to the best journalism.

Media Interviews and Speaking Engagements

Reuters staff are sometimes asked by broadcasters or print publications to give interviews, often through our media relations unit. We encourage such exposure for our journalists and their expertise. If journalists are willing to be interviewed, they should adhere to the following principles:

- Any interviews have to be approved in advance by the journalist's manager.
- Interviews with Reuters own services, e.g. RVN, take precedence.
- The request must come from a credible broadcaster or publication that is unlikely to use the interview for propaganda purposes.
- Correspondents must not give personal opinions and should confine themselves largely to what has been reported by Reuters.
- Correspondents should say nothing that could provoke controversy, embarrass Reuters, undermine our reputation for objectivity and impartiality, impair our reporting access or jeopardise staff.
- We must be satisfied that the correspondent is an experienced member of staff upon whom we can rely to act with responsibility and discretion.
- We only allow brief interviews that impinge little on correspondents' time and do not disrupt their reporting.
- Payment should not be sought. If received, we recommend that it be paid to your charity of choice.

Reuters editorial staff with specialist knowledge may also speak at seminars, conferences and other forums about the areas of their expertise with the approval of their manager. Similar conditions apply as with those for media interviews. Staff must ensure that the credentials of the organisers are such that attending the event as a speaker does not affect Reuters reputation for integrity,

independence and freedom from bias. Editorial staff need authorisation from a senior manager to discuss our editorial or corporate affairs publicly or with other media. If another media organisation asks about our policies (whether editorial or corporate), about staff matters or about stories or images that may be controversial, employees must refer the matter to a manager, who should take details and refer the enquirer to an official company spokesman.

Category: Standards and Values

This page was last modified 10:50, 21 September 2009.

Integrity

Integrity requires us to adhere to the highest ethical standards of our profession and to the values enshrined in the Reuters Trust Principles. All employees have a responsibility to ensure that the reputation of Reuters retains its high standing with whomever we come into contact. As a member of the Reuters team, you are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to acceptable professional standards in matters of personal conduct and exhibit a high degree of personal integrity at all times. When operating outside of your home country, you must also have due regard for all relevant local legislation and regulations and act with appropriate respect for local culture and custom.

Contents

- 1 Acting within the law
- 2 Identifying ourselves as journalists
- 3 Reporting from the Internet
- 4 Insider trading
- 5 Dealing with sources
- 6 Dealing with customers
- 7 Dealing with people
- 8 Dealing with competitors
- 9 Dealing with complaints
- 10 Dealing with the authorities
- 11 Dealing with each other
- 12 Reporting incidents
- 13 Life outside Reuters

Acting within the law

One of the fundamental things that we try to do at Reuters is to ensure that we are aware of and comply with the many different laws, rules and standards of conduct that apply to us in all the countries where we operate.

In gathering the news, we must ensure that we do so in a way that is legal and above board. Purloining data and documents, breaking into premises, electronic eavesdropping, telephone taps, computer hacking and defeating passwords or other security methods on internet websites are all illicit and should not be used in the course of our work.

Extremely rare circumstances may arise when breaking a story is so overwhelmingly in the public interest that we may need to consider actions that could be construed as illegal. In such cases, all legal means of obtaining the necessary information must have been exhausted. A decision to go beyond that point must be taken at the highest level in editorial in consultation with the Reuters General Counsel's Office. For fuller guidance see the Legal Dangers section of the Handbook.

Identifying ourselves as journalists

Reuters journalists do not obtain news by deception. We identify ourselves at all times as working for Reuters. We do not pass ourselves off as something other than a journalist, nor do we pretend to be from other news organisations.

Circumstances may arise when an assumption is made about who we are. It may be appropriate to allow that assumption to persist in the interests of news gathering. Staff should apply common sense and the spirit of our Code of Conduct in determining what to do. In all cases, we must identify ourselves as Reuters journalists if challenged.

Reporting from the Internet

We are committed to aggressive journalism in all its forms, including in the field of computer-assisted reporting, but we draw the line at illegal behaviour. Internet reporting is nothing more than applying the principles of sound journalism to the sometimes unusual situations thrown up in the virtual world. The same standards of sourcing, identification and verification apply. Take the same precautions online as you would in other forms of newsgathering and do not use anything from the Internet that is not sourced in such a way that you can verify where it came from. For further guidance on the use of the Internet to report see the section of this Handbook, REPORTING FROM THE INTERNET.

Insider trading

Insider trading is the buying or selling of the securities of any company (including Reuters) while in possession of material, non-public information about it. Tipping is the improper disclosure of such information. You would be guilty of insider trading or tipping if, while possessing information that is not in the public domain about a company, you bought or sold securities or gave to a third party information on the basis of which they bought, sold or retained securities.

Reuters forbids its staff to participate in insider trading and/or tipping information that could have an impact - negative or positive - on the price of Reuters shares or any other company's shares or securities. These are grounds for dismissal. We must avoid not only impropriety but also any appearance of impropriety. Insider trading and tipping are also criminal offences in many countries and carry heavy penalties.

These guidelines are based on U.S. law, perhaps the most stringent of any country on this issue. The definition of a company security is all-embracing. Information is considered material if it is likely to affect the market price of a security and there is a substantial likelihood that a reasonable investor would attach importance to it in deciding whether to buy, sell or hold a security. It is irrelevant whether the information is factual or speculative or whether it is generated inside or outside Reuters. Examples of material information include: information about contemplated mergers or acquisitions, impending bankruptcy, business plans, proposed sale or purchase of assets, pending government reports and statistics, e.g. the consumer price index, financial forecasts, earnings estimates, changes in management and the gain or loss of a substantial customer or supplier.

Information is considered non-public until it has been publicly disclosed (in a major news publication or on a wire service, in a public filing made to a regulatory agency or in materials sent to shareholders) and the market has had time to absorb and react to the information. It should be assumed that information obtained in the course of employment by Reuters is non-public. The fact that rumours about this information may be circulating, even if they are widespread, does not mean the information is public and does not relieve you from the obligation to treat the information as non-public. For fuller guidance see the Legal Dangers section of this Handbook.

Dealing with sources

Sources must be cultivated by being professionally polite and fair. The Reuters Code of Conduct applies when it comes to relationships with sources that involve gifts, travel, and opportunities that result from inside information. The basic rule is that we pay our own way. We encourage staff to cultivate sources but also expect them to be conscious of the need to maintain a detachment from them. We should not cultivate or associate with sources on one side of an issue to a point where there are grounds to question whether the relationship has exceeded the bounds of proper, professional contact. While it is appropriate to entertain sources, including outside working hours, regularly spending substantial leisure time with them may raise a potential conflict or a perception of bias. A good measure of the propriety of the relationship is to ask whether you would be comfortable spending as much time with another source on a different side of the issue or your beat. If in doubt, seek guidance from your manager.

A romantic or family attachment with a news source or with a person or persons who might be the subject of a staff member's coverage should be disclosed to the appropriate manager. Journalists may also not report on or quote family members in order to avoid a perception of favouritism or bias.

Dealing with customers

Many of our customers are often also our news sources or the subjects of the news we report. Our relationship with them should be governed by the professional behaviours required of journalists. It is essential in our dealings with clients that we should be courteous, helpful and attentive when they approach us with concerns or questions about our news service or about specific reports. We also need to pay attention in our dealings with clients as journalists to the clear line that separates the editorial and commercial functions of Reuters. While we may discuss news issues and the news functionality of our products, it would be inappropriate for journalists to negotiate sales contracts with clients or potential customers.

We should avoid misrepresenting ourselves to clients, avoid defaming our competitors and avoid encouraging clients to divulge information about them in a manner that would breach their obligation to those competitors.

Dealing with people

A reputation for accurate, balanced reporting is one of our biggest assets. We must not shy away from painful reality, but we should also seek to minimise any harm to the public through our actions. The people who make the news are vulnerable to the impact of our stories. In extreme cases, their lives or their reputations could depend on our reporting.

When covering people in the news, Reuters journalists:

- Avoid needless pain and offence
- Treat victims with sensitivity
- Eschew gossip about the private lives of public figures
- Avoid sensationalism and hype
- Seek clear, unambiguous accounts of the facts
- Are on alert for spin and other forms of media manipulation
- Are wary of assumptions and bias, including our own as journalists

A Reuters journalist shows integrity, impartiality, persistence, accountability and humility when covering people. When these principles are applied, we should be able to defend any story to ourselves, our sources and our readers. Fuller guidance can be found in REPORTING ABOUT PEOPLE.

Dealing with competitors

Reuters engages in vigorous competition to report the news first and best. At the same time, we compete fairly, without placing obstacles in the way of our competitors. We want information about our competitors but must take care that the way we collect that information, and how we share it and use it, is not improper or illegal. We acknowledge when our competitors obtain exclusive news that is of value to our customers by attributing it to them clearly in pickups, just as we would expect from them.

We do not "do deals" with our competitors on covering the news, trade material with them or divulge information to rivals about editorial or corporate policies and operations. We should cooperate when justified in circumstances when to do so would reduce the risk to life and limb or when access to an event is restricted and it is in everyone's interest to pool information or images. We may also cooperate with our competitors on matters of mutual interest such as staff safety, government regulation, and legal and other legitimate action to protect the rights of the media.

Dealing with complaints

The Reuters reputation for getting it right and reporting it fairly is something we should be proud of. It is a key part of attracting and keeping clients. Sometimes we do get it wrong, and it is important for our reputation to fix it when we do. Responding promptly and properly to complaints that we have not been accurate, balanced or ethical can avoid what could become costly legal problems, or widespread bad publicity. Complaints from any quarter - a source, a client, a member of the public, or a colleague in another part of Reuters - must be investigated promptly so that immediate corrective action can be taken if it proves to be well founded. Complaints that cannot be immediately investigated must be acknowledged at once and followed up quickly. They should be handled at a senior level in the bureau or on the desk.

Remember throughout the process of dealing with complaints that attitude counts. Getting mad or sounding overtly hostile may only make the person raising an issue more determined to press forward and less inclined to listen to what we have to say. It may help if you try to think of what you're hearing as feedback or constructive criticism, rather than simply a complaint. Full guidance on what to do can be found in DEALING WITH COMPLAINTS.

Dealing with the authorities

Any requests for published or unpublished Reuters content (e.g. video tapes, copies of stories, photographs or journalists' notes or other background materials) from police, security forces, tribunals and the like or from lawyers or individuals involved in civil or criminal court proceedings should be referred to a senior editor who should alert the legal department.

We have a duty to report the truth, to challenge censorship and seek ways of breaking news of major public interest. We do not voluntarily hand over published or unpublished material to authorities. Where appropriate, we will consider filing lawful challenges to court orders or subpoenas that would seek to compel disclosure of such material. This is for the safety of Reuters staff and in order to preserve Reuters reputation of independence and freedom from bias.

All original tapes and picture files of sensitive situations that could conceivably end up in court, such as riots or killings, and other material such as audio tapes or notes must be couriered to London immediately for safekeeping. For materials relating to events in the United Kingdom, the tapes and picture files must be shipped to New York. In dealing with any request for material, distinguish between published and unpublished material. If the request relates to published Reuters content, we may refer the person making the request to the various commercial services that offer such material: Factiva for news reports, RPA for pictures and ITN for video footage, as these services are generally available to the public.

Dealing with each other

Teamwork is crucial to our success at Reuters and one of our greatest strengths. Joint planning and cooperation by staff in all disciplines - text, news pictures, TV and graphics - is not only expected, but is required if we are to take full advantage of our position. We share information, ideas, non-confidential contacts and the burden of coverage.

Reuters supports the right of every employee in editorial to contribute ideas, suggestions and positive criticisms of what we do and how we do it. The Company also recognises that every employee has the right to work in an environment free from harassment, intimidation or offensive behaviour and one in which any issue of harassment will be resolved without reprisal or breach of confidentiality. Staff should feel able to raise concerns about standards and ethics and report any perceived breach of our high standards to their manager without fear of recrimination.All employees are expected to take personal responsibility for upholding our standards by treating with dignity and respect, all job applicants, fellow employees, customers, contract and temporary personnel and any other individuals associated with Reuters.

Reporting incidents

The internal reporting of serious incidents involving harm or risk to staff, significant problems with stories or images, hoaxes and allegations of improper behaviour is an important part of any manager's job. Non-managerial staff who become aware of any such incident must report it to their supervisor. The reporting of such incidents is essential to keep senior company officials up to date on situations that affect staff and operations or which have the potential to embarrass Reuters or affect the company's reputation. A report from one part of the world - on an attempted hoax, for example - can also provide an important tip-off to managers in another part of the world. We also

need to be able to spot trends and take precautions if a pattern is discerned, instead of treating each "incident" as a once-off. Managers should familiarise themselves with the guidelines for DEALING WITH THREATS, DANGEROUS SITUATIONS AND INCIDENTS INVOLVING REUTERS OR ITS STAFF.

Life outside Reuters

Please see the companywide Reuters Code of Conduct. The section on the use of computer and communication systems permits staff to make incidental personal use of Reuters e-mail and other communications facilities, including the Internet. As members of editorial, however, we have a special responsibility to ensure that there can be no confusion between our professional activities and our private interests or personal opinions. For example, expressions of political opinion or investment advice in e-mails sent on company systems to outside addresses breach our Code of Conduct in so far as they identify Reuters with a cause or position. They can result in disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Other circumstances may arise when similar perceptions of a conflict could occur. A reporter covering the power industry, for example, would be wrong to e-mail a complaint about overcharging to his or her electricity company using Reuters systems. Staff in any doubt about what can appropriately be sent on Reuters e-mail systems should err on the side of caution and use a private e-mail address or consult their manager.

Staff should not conduct private correspondence using company stationery. They should not use their Reuters identity cards or their position as a journalist to obtain benefits and advantages that are not available to the general public. Exceptions include discounts and privileges negotiated by the company for all staff or discounts that are generally available to all journalists in a given country. Here too, however, editorial employees need to recognise the potential for a perceived conflict of interest and should consult their manager if they have doubts. It may be appropriate, for example, for a photographer to obtain a journalists' discount on a particular make of car but a correspondent covering the automobile industry should consult a manager on whether to proceed. Common sense is often the best guide in such cases.

Category: Standards and Values

This page was last modified 12:47, 21 September 2009.

Guide to Operations

Text

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 14:19, 1 July 2008.

Reporting and Writing Basics

Accuracy and fairness are the hallmarks of Thomson Reuters journalism. Neither accuracy or nor fairness must ever be sacrificed for speed. If we lose our reputation for accuracy and fairness we lose everything. We reinforce to readers our commitment to accuracy and fairness by being totally honest about rectifying errors - promptly and openly. Double-check facts, figures, names, dates and spellings. Watch for typographical errors. And make sure there is enough context in the story to ensure balance and fairness.

Accuracy in Reuters includes accurate, "coding", the proper use of "slugs and slugging", using the most appropriate "headline tags" and consistency of style (see the Reuters Style Guide). Accuracy is also more than just getting the facts right - it is getting the right facts, and backing up our interpretation of the facts with authoritative and unimpeachable sourcing. We need to let the reader know how we know what we know.

Contents

- 1 Who do we write for?
- 2 Basic story structure
- 3 Targeted writing
- 4 Tips for good story writing
- 5 Get the first two paragraphs right
- 6 Make the headline strong
- 7 Don't neglect the slug
- 8 The 10 key words approach
- 9 How long before you reach a crucial word?
- 10 Count the words in your first sentence
- 11 Tricks of the trade
- 12 Some checks for error-free copy
- 13 The Attention Editor flag

Who do we write for?

Think about your readership when you are digging for the news as well as when you begin to write. Know the Reuters client base. Occasionally we write local news for a local readership, but usually we are writing local or national news for a national or international readership. Usually we are writing for an international politically and financially aware demographic, but our readers may not have specialist knowledge of all markets or industries or regions. The kinds of readers we write for usually obtain news, analysis and commentary from agencies like Reuters and its financial market competitors, as well as major national and international newspapers, recognized news websites and television channels.

Alerts or snaps are usually written for specialist readers interested in corporate news, or economics and markets, as are some bullet point and other items. But most Reuters stories have to travel beyond your own market, or industry or country, and should usually be written so that a single version of the story can be sent to most relevant wires or products. This does not mean you need to dumb the story down, but it does mean that you will usually need a phrase of explanation of technical terms, and you will usually need context and background to help the reader understand

the significance of the story. Sometimes we write for a more specialized readership but even then we need context to help explain the significance of the story and ensure fairness and balance.

Basic story structure

A good Reuters story gets straight to the point and has all the main elements - including some context, analysis, human interest, and color woven in from the top, not just tagged on as an after-thought.

The tried and tested "inverted pyramid" method - ordering the elements of the story in declining order of importance - is the usual format for hard news. We need to answer the basic journalistic questions - Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? So What? The story should be written so it is self-contained, no matter where the reader stops or the copy editor makes the cut.

Make sure the story explains the significance of the event or speech or development. It needs to answer the "so what" question. Usually this is done high up in the story by means of some context and is often called a "nut graph". Does the story spell out the risks for those exposed to the news ? Does it identify potential winners and losers from the event or change in market trend?

Generally, the "inverted pyramid" approach works with leads or first paragraphs too, with the most important, or newest elements presented first, followed by the supporting details, such as the source. A simple example: a profit result would be presented as rising "to x from y" not "from y to x" (new information first).

```
Make sure sourcing is clear and precise (see The essentials of Reuters sourcing)
```

Keep it simple. Use clear, simple language; verbs in the active voice rather than the passive (the bomb "killed" 10 people rather than "left 10 people dead"). Omit needless words (e.g. "21 'different' countries"); "that" can often be dropped (e.g. "He said 'that'â’¦"). Use short words instead of long (e.g. "about" instead of "approximately"). Generally, it's better to add detail and color, using nouns and verbs, rather than with adjectives.

Ensure the story is fair and balanced. Watch for phrases that might suggest we are taking sides (e.g. "fears" or "hopes"). Be careful with words like "claimed" and phrases such as "according to" which suggest we doubt what is being said.

STORY LENGTH Reuters uses a series of story formats (Alerts or Snaps, Newsbreaks/Urgents, Updates and Wrapups) to meet the differing speed needs of its readers, ranging from intraday traders in banks and funds through to news websites, newspapers and television. As a result we need to abide by line length guidelines to enable reporters and editors to move the copy quickly to meet readers speed needs.

Newsbreaks or Urgents should be no more than TWO or THREE paragraphs, or about 100 words or 10 lines in Lynx Editor software, if the news is unexpected. Newsbreaks that include pre-written material may run longer, provided this does not compromise the time gap between the alerts ("snaps") and the newsbreak, sometimes called the "snapgap".

Update 1s to newsbreaks should be no more than about FIVE paragraphs or 200 words or about 20 lines in Lynx Editor. Longer update1s may be cut from the bottom up by desk editors in order to

move the copy quickly. Update 1s that include pre-written material may run longer, provided this does not delay the story.

The update series or "trunk" story format is designed to allow the reporter and editor to add information and analysis incrementally as the news breaks. Short, quick updates help meet the readers needs. Adding another 100 words or 10 lines to an update1 for an update2 and moving it quickly is more helpful on breaking news than waiting for a full write through. Desks should try to fix and move problematic early updates quickly by cutting the story and asking the reporter for a better version for the next update.

All other stories: While we are not constrained by space like newspapers, readers prefer short, easy-to-read stories and analyses, so newspaper story length guidelines are still useful. Most stories in newspapers are between 300 and 800 words (30 to 80 lines in Lynx Editor) and most Reuters stories should be about the same. Remember newspapers around the world are still among our customers. Desks will be tough on overwritten copy, even if the word count falls within the rules. If a story cannot be cut from the bottom up because it is poorly structured, it may be sent back for a rewrite. This will delay publication.

- Most breaking news updates, sidebars, and intra-day market reports should be no more than about 500 words or 50 lines in Lynx Editor.
- The final update or wrap up on a top news story that is likely to appear on a top news webpage or media wire news schedule, may run to about 800 words or 80 lines. This includes closing market reports for major markets, and also applies to most analyses.
- Occasionally wraps ups on top news stories, significant interviews, analyses and features stretch to around 1300 words or 130 lines in Lynx Editor software, if it is the top story of the day or a story of major international significance. But not every story is a Special Report which sometimes run to magazine length of 2000-3000 words.

Targeted writing

Good writing must be pitched correctly at its readership. This is at the heart of how we structure a story file, where we put our emphasis, and where we can reduce our effort, while still producing a news file that makes its mark.

This is particularly true for major global stories, where reaction to a news event breaks from multiple datelines. To ensure the leanest, most targeted file, we must focus our efforts in two areas. First, we must provide a well-written, cross-market trunk story. Second, we must provide quick, insightful market reaction in the form of merited alerts and newsbreaks. A rolling format, such as an INSTANT VIEW may sometimes be the quickest way to provide market reaction. This will save reporters time, allow the desk to focus on the news rather than the reaction, and help readers navigate through the file.

Tips for good story writing

"Tell me something I don't already know" That's what clients want. Look for a new fact, angle, interpretation, reaction and explain the implications, whether you are covering politics, economics, corporate affairs, financial markets, sport or any other news. News does not happen in a vacuum - often the story is "outcome versus expectations" or "outcome versus comparisons". In other words,

it's the context that makes the story. For a scheduled news event, make sure you know what's expected and what the risks and implications might be if expectations fall short, or are exceeded. For a scheduled event preparation should start well before the actual news or announcement. This could involve pre-writing of the context, either as a "curtain-raiser" or of material to slot into the story when the time comes.

Get the first two paragraphs right

The first two paragraphs of a news story are crucial. Tell the reader immediately what has happened and why it's important. If you haven't told the story in the first two paragraphs it's too late. A reader of one of Reuters proprietary online products will often read no further than the first paragraph - assuming he or she gets past the headline. A newspaper may well cut the story to a couple of paragraphs to make it fit a news-in-brief column. An online service will put just those first two paragraphs on its main page. A bored or confused reader is unlikely to read on. If we haven't told the story, straight away, we may as well have missed it. The lead, or first paragraph, is the key. If you get the lead right, the rest will follow.

Make the headline strong

Financial terminal clients and online readers trade, search and click open on the strength of the headline. If you can write the headline, you can write the lead. If you can write the lead you can write the story. Give headlines the attention they deserve. Too many are dull, and fail to do their job - which is to catch attention and draw the reader into the story. Headlines must be sharp and informative. Use short words and an active verb and avoid unfamiliar abbreviations. Make sure it makes clear where the news is happening e.g. "Central Bank cuts interest rates" - Which central bank? It is better to convey one idea crisply and clearly than to cram in two ideas awkwardly. Stick to the one main point. Don't try to fit in too much or be clever with words and abbreviations. Headlines have only 50 characters, including spaces but excluding tags like UPDATE 1 or ANALYSIS.

Don't neglect the slug

Slugs are made up of two parts - a packaging slug that is the same on all the pieces of a story that belong together and a wild (or flying) extension that describes that particular item. Media customers may use slugs to search for items, so the packaging slug should quickly describe the story in one or two words. A good story slug catches the eye, and should provide a strong pointer to what should appear in your headline and in your first paragraph. For example BC-PHILIPPINES-HOSTAGES/ is a very strong pointer that both Philippines and hostages will appear in the headline and the lead. The format indicates that the entire package of news will be about PHILIPPINES-HOSTAGES and that this item is the lead story, or trunk. Other breaking news items carry an extension to distinguish them from the main story, eg. BC-PHILLPPINES-HOSTAGES/SHOTS.

The 10 key words approach

Try making a list of 10 key words without which you simply could not write the story. They don't have to be the exact words you will use in the story. Think more of the facts or concepts which must

be there. So a story about oil prices would definitely have the key words oil and prices, but they might be expressed in the story as crude and dollars per barrel. Once you have that list of keywords you have the essence of the story. Most or all should appear in the first sentence. All should appear by the end of the second paragraph.

How long before you reach a crucial word?

This is a variation of the 10 key words approach. Read your lead and then count the number of words you use before you reach the one that is strong and essential and cannot be the thrown away. This is very often the news point. If you go beyond three or four words before reaching that "must have" word then stop and rewrite. You should be hitting strong, essential words very quickly after you start to read the first sentence.

Try this one:

> "A Baldonian woman who appeared to be in very poor health while held hostage by Philippine rebels for 12 weeks is remarkably well despite reports that she had contemplated suicide, a doctor said on Tuesday after her return home to Baldonia City."

That's a 42-word intro, and you have to count 13 words before you reach the first word that grabs you: "hostage". You get there much sooner this way: "A Baldonian woman held hostage for 12 weeks by Philippine rebels is remarkably well despite reports she was ill and had contemplated suicide, a doctor said after she returned home on Tuesday." The attention-grabbing word "hostage" is the fifth word and the news point that she is well is reported sooner in the sentence.

Count the words in your first sentence

If there are more than 25, start to get nervous. If there are more than 30 then get very nervous. By the time you reach 40 it's time to break the sentence in two and reach for a full stop. If you reach 50 you've definitely gone too far. Simply breaking the sentence can be a very useful way of shortening your lead. Add a full stop/period half way along and then check that all the most important elements are in the first sentence.

Don't get weighed down by too many details in the lead Shorten and summarise titles and positions. You can be more specific further down. Don't be too specific about geography. Think about whether the reader needs to know this detail this soon. Use only the most telling detail in the lead and give the broad picture. Every story must say when events described occurred. This time element usually, but not always, should be in the first paragraph, but try not to put more than one time element in the lead.

Support your lead with a quote Direct quotes add colour and strength to your story and they prove you have spoken to someone who knows what happened. Try to support your lead by a direct quote by the third or fourth paragraph, and be precise about who said this and where it was said. Listen for that "golden quote" - the one that will best illustrate the main point of the story.

People rarely speak eloquently or succinctly. They do not order their facts in a way a journalist would. So use one or two short quotes in a story rather than several long ones. Make sure your quote pushes the story forward rather than simply echoes what you've just written.

Do not write: The hostage was released on Sunday and was in remarkably good health, the doctor said. "She is in remarkably good condition," Joseph Smith said. That is called a "parrot" quote or "echo" quote and bores the reader. Rather, look for a quote that is different and strengthens the lead while pushing the story forward: The hostage was released on Sunday and was in remarkably good health, the doctor said. "I'm very satisfied with her health, but she's tired and suffering from the tension of recent weeks." That reinforces the lead but pushes the story forward.

Avoid "broken" quotes unless the words are unusual, contentious or highly colourful. Bloggs said she was "delighted" to be working with such a "great" boss â'¦ does not need the words between quotes. Bloggs said she was "angry enough to kill" because she was working "with a pathetic excuse for a boss" â'¦ does need the words between quotes.

Quotes can also be used to:

- Catch distinctions and nuances in important passages of speeches and convey some of the flavour of the speaker's language.
- Document and support third party statements made in the lead and elsewhere.
- Set off controversial material, where the precise wording can be an issue, as in legal contexts.

When using indirect (or reported) speech, instead of direct quotes, sources either say something or they don't. Innuendo is rarely acceptable in news reporting. You should never guess at what a source means. To write in a news story that someone hinted, implied, indicated, suggested, or signalled is to interpret someone's actions, words, or thoughts. This is rarely acceptable.

Tricks of the trade

- Don't leave holes. Don't mention an element without explaining it. If you have just said that this merger will create the second-largest widget maker in the region, don't make the reader wait five paragraphs before revealing who is the largest.
- Build blocks. Try to group all the information relating to one element of your story in one block of paragraphs. Do not touch upon an issue in the third paragraph and then come back to it in the eighth.
- Write sequentially. Each sentence should connect to the next like a link in a chain. You make a statement, expand on it in the next paragraph, illustrate it with a quote in the third paragraph, and give some figures or background in the fourth paragraph. Then you move on to the next "block" by using a signpost sentence.
- Use signposts to let readers know you are moving to the next theme. A signpost or marker can be as simple as a "but" or it can be a short sentence which summarises what follows.
- Use "crossheads" to break up the story. Every 200-250 words is a reasonable pace.

Some checks for error-free copy

Many corrections can be prevented by checking simple things. Here are some tips to keep errors down before you send your story to the desk:

- Confirm the day of the week and the date.

- Check all the numbers - do all the components add up to the total, do individual percentages add up to 100? Double check the period covered, conversions, whether the figure is up or down. Watch for confusion between millions and billions, misplaced decimal points, transposed conversions. Check share prices.
- Watch the spelling of proper names and ensure names are spelled consistently throughout the story.
- Make sure there is a quote to back up a contentious lead.
- Ensure the story gives full company names, full and proper titles, and RICs in both the text and header field. Check that unfamiliar RICs and web site addresses mentioned in the story actually work.
- Does the story make clear how we got the information, e.g. newspaper pickup, interview, news conference?
- Ensure information in the story agrees with the headline, and if appropriate, the Alert (Bulletin). Are the headline tag and slug correct and appropriate?
- Ensure the Unique Story Number (USN) matches that of the Alert (if any).
- Check for legal dangers and balance. Does the story cast a slur on the good name of an individual, company or organisation? Does it expose anyone to ridicule, hatred or contempt? Is the story balanced and fair?
- Ensure tabular material carries tabular formatting in the header field.
- If you file the story to clients, MAKE SURE IT HITS THE SCREEN.

The Attention Editor flag

The warning flag ATTN EDITOR (or ATTN ED) should be included on the comment line of the header field, below the headline, and be added in brackets to the slug of any story that a correspondent thinks may be legally dangerous or may affect the status or reputation of Reuters. (Be aware that when transferring stories from region to region, editing systems may strip off the comment line and headline field). When a story is flagged ATTN EDITOR the reasons should be explained to the editing desk in a separate **service message** to the same codes used to send the story to the desk. The desk receiving such a story should refer it to the editor-in-charge. All reporters must clearly understand when and how to use the ATTN EDITOR flag. See Attention Editor items and Hoaxes for full details.

- *In Lynx Editor, there is no service message function and the reasons should be explained in an email to the desk to which the story has been filed.*

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 21:03, 21 February 2012.

The Drill for Breaking News

Reuters uses a series of story formats (Alerts or Snaps, Newsbreaks/Urgents, Updates and Wrapups) to meet the differing speed needs of its readers which range from intraday traders in banks and funds through to news websites, newspapers and television. As a result we need to abide by line length guidelines to enable reporters and editors to move the copy quickly to meet readers needs.

Major breaking news is handled by writing an ALERT, followed by a NEWSBREAK, followed by an UPDATE and a SKEDLINE.

Contents

- 1 The Alert
- 2 The Newsbreak
- 3 Newsbreak content
- 4 The Update
- 5 Subsequent Updates
- 6 The skedline
- 7 The drill - making it work

The Alert

The Alert (sometimes called a "snap" or "bulletin") is the highest priority item for Reuters services.

An Alert is:

- Up to 100 characters in length as some Thomson Reuters products cannot handle longer alerts.
- Written entirely in upper case (except for lower case letters in RICs)
- Sourced (among rare exceptions: routine corporate results, scheduled economic indicator releases).
- Written in the present tense.
- Filed at "priority 1".
- Normally filed without a dateline. But a dateline may be added if the location of the news event is required for clarity and context. The dateline, to be used only in the first of a series of alerts, is separated from the text by a hyphen with a space either side (e.g. NEW YORK - THAI LEADER SAYS...)
- *In Lynx Editor, the Alerting Tool is accessed from the dropdown menu under the "New" button and the alert is created in your personal basket. The header is prefilled with default codes which can be changed manually. Most RICs generate topic and "publish to" codes and a character count is displayed in the status bar at the bottom of the window.*

File an Alert when you judge that news may move a market or influence client decisions, or that it will be of significant interest to a global readership. Think of it as a long headline with a source. The Alert tells the reader the essential facts - only. Some stories may need a series of Alerts but think twice if you are filing more than about five on a single newsbreak. Clients complain if we flood

screens with red all-capitals headlines that make it difficult to see the essential news and merely add detail that belongs in the story itself. News judgment is important when deciding whether to file Alerts. Do not cheapen their value by using them when they are not justified. Clarity is critical, precise sourcing essential. Sources may be omitted only for a regular economic indicator or company result or a scheduled public event. Use simple everyday nouns and active present tense verbs. Avoid slang and jargon. Use known abbreviations.

Example: ZX PLC SAYS CLINICAL TESTS SHOW PROMISE OF RED TOADFLAX COLD CURE

The Newsbreak

An "urgent", or "newsbreak", or "rush" is a short breaking news story that usually follows an Alert and is filed at "Priority 2". Following the Alert or series of Alerts, the Newsbreak puts the facts into context and makes them meaningful. Stories sent "Priority 2" must have the word URGENT in brackets after the slug in the "slugline".

Newsbreaks must use the same Unique Story Number as the Alert or Alerts.

In Lynx Editor, this is achieved by filing the alert by choosing the "publish and newsbreak" option from the "Publish" menu. Alternatively, select the alert in a Lynx Editor Publish basket and click on "Add Chained" at the top. This creates a dialog box that will allow you to add further alerts or a newsbreak, all with the same USN.

The Alert and the Newsbreak remain on the screen and they are not replaced with later updates. If a story is unlikely to move a market but still requires a quick start, coverage may start with a Newsbreak, to be followed within 30 minutes maximum by an Update 1.

Most Newsbreaks should be no more than TWO paragraphs or 100 words or about 10 lines in Lynx Editor if the news is unexpected. Newsbreaks that include pre-written material may run longer, provided this does not compromise "snap gaps" or the time between the alerts and the newsbreak.

Speed is vital but not at the expense of accuracy. Aim to follow up the Alert by having a Newsbreak on the wire within 5 - 10 minutes maximum. Expect the desk to chase you if the Alert is not "covered" by the 10-minute deadline. Expect to be asked to explain "snap gaps" of more than 10 minutes. Context is an essential element in any Newsbreak. Alerts tell clients all the market-sensitive details they need. If, after writing the Newsbreak, you have material you think needs to be reported, write a short UPDATE 1. You can, if necessary, use the same top and same headline as the Newsbreak, adding the new material at the bottom. There is no need for a Newsbreak to repeat slavishly every detail in a sequence of Alerts if the essential news is adequately covered.

Newsbreak content

A Newsbreak must contain the following elements:

- The main facts, the source and the circumstances (e.g. the IBM chairman at a news conference) and the time element.

- Answer the "So what?" question, i.e. they must put the news in its context. They must start telling the story, signal significance, give comparisons, and include market reaction if this is instant.
- An authoritative quote is desirable. But don't hold up the Newsbreak if you don't have a quote.

On a predictable/scheduled event, reporters should prepare by writing background for inclusion in the Newsbreak and canvassing sources on the likely outcomes. They should have a quote ready for each. Make sure you say he or she spoke before the event if you use a pre-prepared quote.

Example:

BC-COLD-CURE/ZX (URGENT) ZX says cold cure trials show promise

LONDON, Aug 7 (Reuters) - ZX Plc chairman Vulcan Sunburster said on Monday that clinical trials had been promising in the British-based pharmaceutical company's quest for a remedy for the Zeta strain of common cold.

"We are prudent about a drug just yet for the Zeta strain of cold virus but phase two clinical trials show real promise with Red Toadflax. It looks good," Sunburster said in a statement after the release of the company's half-year results.

The Update

An Update is a story aimed at carrying forward an earlier report by weaving together fresh developments, reaction, added context and interpretation, analysis and background. The word UPDATE is used as a tag in the headline and appears in the "slugline" in brackets. The first Update in the series would be UPDATE 1, the next UPDATE 2 etc.

The Update is sometimes called a "lead" in newsroom jargon ("Lead" or "lede" can also be a synonym for an intro - the opening paragraph of a news story). Use a new Unique Story Number for the Update and retain it throughout the Update series.

UPDATE 1s to Newsbreaks should be no more than about 200 words 20 lines in Lynx Editor or about five or six paragraphs, unless they are based on pre-written material. They should be filed to clients within 30 minutes of the Newsbreak.

Example:

BC-COLD-CURE/ZX-SHARES (UPDATE 1) UPDATE 1-ZX shares soar on cold cure hope (Writes through adding analysis, quotes) By Penny Wort

LONDON, Aug 7 (Reuters) - Shares in British drugs firm ZX Plc soared 25 percent on Monday after it said that new clinical trials buoyed hopes it may find a cure for the Zeta strain of common cold using a rare herb called Red Toadflax.

The shares hit 10.50 pounds despite only a modest increase in interim profits on the possibility of a drug for the Zeta cold bug that hit the world at the dawn of a new millennium with a pandemic of debilitating coughs and sneezes.

"We are prudent about a drug just yet for the Zeta strain of cold virus but phase two clinical tests show real promise with Red Toadflax. It looks good," ZX Chairman Vulcan Sunburster said in a statement after the release of half-year results.

ZX first half pre-tax profits to June 30 at 302 million pounds ($455 million) were virtually unchanged from 293 million in the same period of last year. Sales were up 12 percent at 1.27 billion pounds and the interim dividend was steady at two pence.

Just 18 months ago ZX spent $300 million buying Dutch company GrasGroen NV which had begun work on Red Toadflax, an old folk remedy, to treat the Zeta strain of cold.

Pharmaceuticals analyst Manx Sheerwater at brokers Thorn Grass Tare called the latest announcement a bombshell. "Everyone believes that Sunburster had a touch of gold. If he is happy on Red Toadflax they'll bet their shirts," Sheerwater said.

Subsequent Updates

An UPDATE may be refreshed as the story develops, or when fresh reaction comes in e.g. THAILAND-KING/ (UPDATE 2), THAILAND-KING/ (UPDATE 3) etc.

UPDATE X- is also used as the headline tag (e.g. UPDATE 4-Thai monarch orders â'¦).

There should be an ADVISORY LINE under the headline telling readers what has been updated (e.g. "Adds king's quotes in third paragraph").

An UPDATE should always have the latest available information and analysis. Remember: When writing a fresh UPDATE, the latest information is not always the most important. You may twin it with the key point from the earlier story or leave the lead unchanged and incorporate the fresh information lower down. You do not need to change the wording of the lead if it is still the strongest news point and is not outdated.

Fresh UPDATES must retain most of the factual material in earlier stories to ensure there is no loss of content when stories are deleted and to enable us to correct any errors in previous copy. All the meat that was in an UPDATE 3, for example, should be included in UPDATE 4 (and 5 etc).

Make sure the UPDATE that follows the Newsbreak has a different Unique Story Number (USN) from the Newsbreak. The UPDATE should not replace the Newsbreak. However, subsequent UPDATES will replace the previous Update in the series. At the end of the day, what will be on the screen are the Alerts (if any), the Newsbreak (or first story in the series) and the final UPDATE (plus and sidebars, analysis etc).

Usually, an UPDATE series would start again at midnight local time with a spot story, followed by an UPDATE 1. And so on. Use common sense. If there's a plane crash at 11:15 at night and you've got an UPDATE 1 out at 11:45 it might look a bit odd and confusing to readers in other time zones to revert to a new series at 12.10. Look for a natural break when you can start the series again.

UPDATE LENGTH: Reuters uses a series of story formats (Alerts or Snaps, Newsbreaks/Urgents, Updates and Wrapups) to meet the differing speed needs of its readers which range from intraday traders in banks and funds through to news websites, newspapers and television. As a result we

need to abide by line length guidelines for each story format to enable reporters and editors to move the copy quickly to meet readers needs.

The update series or "trunk" story format is designed to allow the reporter and editor to add information and analysis incrementally as the news breaks. Short, quick updates help meet the readers needs. Adding another 100 words or 10 lines to an update1 for an update2 and moving it quickly is more helpful on breaking news than waiting for a full write through. Desks should try to fix and move problematic early updates quickly by cutting the story and asking the reporter for a better version for the next update.

Most breaking news updates, sidebars, and intra-day market reports should be no more than about 500 words or 50 lines in Lynx Editor.

The final update or wrap up on a top news story that is likely to appear on a top news webpage or media wire news schedule, may run to about 800 words or 80 lines. This includes closing market reports for major markets, and also applies to most analyses.

A **WRAPUP** is a one-stop shop for clients offering a broad snapshot of the latest developments in a top story of the day. It is a synthesis of significant news developments with the necessary context, colour, background and reaction, not a long list of everything that was said and done. The WRAPUP tag in the headline and after the slug flags these stories to clients. Desks will consult bureaux on when a WRAPUP is appropriate and where to write it. The desk and bureaux should also consult when a change of dateline is appropriate, or when an overnight WRAPUP is needed.

A Wrapup should:

- Pull together news from more than one dateline or story. It is not just the last Update in a series. It is meant to pull together more than one series of updates from different datelines on the same broad subject, or pull together more than one series of updates from the same dateline but on different strands of the broad story.
- Carry the dateline/by-line of the writer with the strongest story.
- Lead on the hardest news and weave in significant developments from other datelines/stories high up - the top 35 lines.
- Be no more than 800 words or about 80 lines in Lynx Editor.
- Follow the news to a fresh dateline as a story develops.
- Be freshened in light of new developments
- Be refined and improved as it is freshened to sharpen the headline and top five paragraphs.
- Bring in essential background, analysis, colour and context and cut out any material that is no longer required each time it is freshened.

A Wrapup should not:

- Include secondary material that is not essential for the reader's understanding.
- Be freshened if there are no new developments unless it can be refined and improved.
- Be written separately when we can take the main strand of a story, tag that WRAPUP rather than UPDATE and weave in developments from elsewhere. Desks will consult bureaux and decide when this is the case.

Use the word (WRAPUP) in the slugline and the headline tag WRAPUP. Wrapups follow the same slugging and tag style as UPDATEs, - i.e. they start with WRAPUP 1, then WRAPUP 2, WRAPUP

3. The practice of replacing earlier Updates on with the latest update applies to Wrapups. Fresh Wrapups must retain the significant factual material in earlier Wrapups to ensure there is no loss of content when stories are deleted and to enable us to correct any errors in previous copy.

The skedline

Send a Skedline or "Next" to the desk, advising how you plan to develop the story with more updates - perhaps also an analysis, newsmaker or sidebar. A Skedline is an entry on a news schedule, a tool that media clients use to see what is on the news agenda, but it also allows our own editors to see where you intend to take the story.

The drill - making it work

The Alert/Newsbreak/Update drill for major stories is designed to help us get information out quickly on breaking news. With scheduled events such as earnings releases, economic indicators, speeches and news conferences, we can also prepare. Here are some tips:

- Pre-write as much background and context as possible. The task then is just to write a lead and perhaps slot in a key quote.
- Desks can often help fix UPDATES by cutting them if they are overwritten in order to move update1s and update2s quickly, leaving reporters to get on with a more polished writethrough.
- Double-staff key events or have two people monitoring a major televised speech. They can hand off to each other on writing sets of Alerts that they cover with Newsbreaks and then fold into an Update.
- Do not allow separate series to proliferate. Most stories do not require more than a single trunk story, updated as needed. Do not do an UPDATE 1 to each Newsbreak unless they are totally different stories.
- Remember to consult the desk and to keep editors abreast of your plans for UPDATES by sending skedlines and talking to them.

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 21:08, 21 February 2012.

Other Common Story Forms

General points

- ALL headlines on all types of stories should be no more than 50 characters excluding headline tags, as some Thomson Reuters products cannot handle longer headlines. All stories except Alerts must have a headline.
- ALL stories except Alerts must have a slug.
- Usually only breaking news stories are updated by adding the UPDATE headline tag though sometimes breaking news may need to be added to other story forms (e.g. UPDATE 1-NEWSMAKER-Blairâ'¦") and adding the UPDATE note to the slug line (e.g. BRITAIN-BLAIR/NEWSMAKER (UPDATE 1, PICTURE...).
- ALL stories, including Tables, Factboxes etc should be filed in one page (or "take") except in cases of extreme length (e.g. a TEXT item or Diary) where there are system limitations. The downstream News Processing System (NPS) used by Reuters has a 10,000-character limit per document. This translates into a maximum "take" length of 150-160 lines or about 1500 words, above which a story must be split into two or more takes. When reopening such a story, use exactly the same slug but add an =2, =3 etc to the headline (which can be shortened to accommodate).

Contents

- 1 Analysis
- 2 Blogging
- 3 Brights or Odds
- 4 Buy or Sell
- 5 Chronology
- 6 Column
- 7 Curtainraisers and holding stories
- 8 Dealtalk
- 9 Diaries
- 10 Factbox
- 11 Feature
- 12 Instant View
- 13 Highlights
    - 13.1 Production:
    - 13.2 XRefs
    - 13.3 Taking Quotes
- 14 Interview
- 15 Newsmaker/Obituary
- 16 Overnight stories
    - 16.1 A story that acts as a bridge between two days
    - 16.2 A story that gives a fresh take on news already in
- 17 Poll (Polling)
- 18 Covering other organisations' polls:
- 19 Q&A
- 20 Scenario boxes
- 21 Secondary

- 22 Sidebar
- 23 Snap analysis
- 24 Snapshot
- 25 Spot story
- 26 Table
- 27 Text
- 28 Timeline
- 29 Top News summaries
- 30 Witness
- 31 Wrapup

Analysis

Generic headline tag ANALYSIS. However analyses may also carry the headline tags INSIGHT, BUY-OR-SELL, HOW-TO-PLAY-IT etc. Slug: XXXX - XXXX (ANALYSIS) Topic Code: ANV We must analyze news as it happens, making analysis part of breaking news. Usually this involves adding some context to explain the significance of the news and possible future developments. Information users are under increasing pressure to take a view on events as soon as they occur so what is likely to happen is often as important for clients as what has happened.

However, a separate story that takes the ANALYSIS tag should identify a trend or development and examine what is likely to happen next and what impact it will have. It should be an informative, in-depth look at an issue. It should usually have a spot news hook, or at least be topical. Rambling discourses that are mere extensions of the hard news cannot be described as Analysis. See also snap analysis

An Analysis stems from the writer's authority and expertise in the subject area but is not a vehicle for personal view (see "COLUMN"). It should pursue an angle or line of argument and the argument should be supported by facts or data and quotes from sources. Don't be afraid to be contrarian, provided your story shows you have done your homework on facts and you have tested your theory by quoting authoritative sources. But it needs to be fair and balanced, acknowledging the existence of other angles or counter-arguments. Be prepared to to be challenged by editors. All reporters must be able to handle an Analysis. .

An Analysis should reflect the expertise, knowledge and contacts - but not the opinions - of the specialist correspondent. Except in the most exceptional circumstances (in countries where sources dare not speak freely) Analysis should include authoritative named sources.

On investment issues, an Analysis must not just give the reader insight into where an asset price may be headed but use real metrics - such as valuation measures or historical performance -- to illustrate the point.

An Analysis should be no more than about 800 words or 80 lines in Lynx Editor, but exceptionally on top stories of the day or on stories of major international significance they run to about 1300 words or 130 lines.

Pitch ideas to your editor before you start work. An Analysis should not be written without prior approval from a regional specialist editor or his/her deputy.

Blogging

Blogging is an informal approach to content creation that has evolved in response to Web users' need for a simple publishing tool giving maximum engagement with readers. Blogging is by nature a flexible format and there are few rules governing its use. Reuters journalists blog to trigger discussions on topical issues, point to the most interesting material on a subject elsewhere on the Web, take readers behind the scenes of our newsgathering, solicit questions for interviews, and to add colour, anecdote and angles that don't make it into our other story types. In addition, blogging is the easiest way we have of handling multimedia story-telling and some Reuters journalists produce video blogs, also known as 'vlogs'.

A Reuters blogger should:

- Be interesting.
- Be conversational: raise questions, invite contributions, discuss what's happening on other blogs, leave some loose ends, and respond to comments made by readers.
- Link to external sites with relevant information
- Monitor other bloggers in the same space and attempt to build reciprocal links with them.
- Tag posts so that they are easy for search engines to find.
- Inject some personality into their posts and include observation and anecdote.
- Make use of multimedia whenever possible and think about a post's layout.
- Credit the original source of all content embedded in posts.
- Make sure posts are seen by a second pair of eyes before publication.
- Ask desks to place a link to their blog/post on relevant stories.

A Reuters blogger should NOT:

- Be one sided opinion. You are free to make observations, ask questions and make an argument, but blogging in Reuters is not a license to vent personal views. You are still bound by the Trust Principles of fairness and balance.
- Respond in anger to comments that appear on posts.
- End each post with the line, 'tell us what you think'. If you have a specific question for readers then ask it, otherwise let the comments box do the work for you.
- Knowingly link to material that infringes copyright.
- Have the colour and personality subbed out of their posts
- Take an idea or insight from another blogger or site without acknowledgement.

Reuters use of blogging is constantly evolving and up-to-date guidance on how blogs are being used is available on the blogging wiki at http://wiki.ime.reuters.com/index.php/Blogging

Brights or Odds

SLUG: XXX-XXX (ODD) Topic Code: ODD A "bright" or "odd" is a story that we report above all because it is funny, quirky or bizarre. A "bright" may also be poignant or sad and invariably involves

people. It is the sort of story we would not bother covering if the details were not so unusual. Such stories lighten our file, are fun to write and go down very well with clients. They should carry the ODD slug and topic code. As a rule of thumb, the ODD slug and code should go hand in hand - don't use one without the other.

Sometimes, hard news stories contain elements that happen to be bizarre or unusual but we write these stories for more serious reasons. The first claim to have created a cloned human being came from a company, Clonaid, which is linked to a group that believes aliens cloned the first humans. That is bizarre, but it is not why we covered the story. These stories are not "brights" and should not carry the ODD slug or topic code. The best "brights" virtually write themselves. If you have to agonise over the first paragraph, the chances are that the story does not make it. You may need a catchy headline and neat turn of phrase to "sell" the story, but don't strain for effect. Good "brights" are almost always so funny, unusual, poignant or offbeat that they can be told straight without adjectives and adverbs. Most good "brights" can be told in under 200 words - a decent amount of space in any newspaper or on any Web site. They work best with a telling quote and often end with a quote or a humorous detail. "Brights" must be properly sourced and must be tasteful. Before writing your "bright", ask yourself whether it will interest a foreign reader. Some offbeat stories only work in a given culture or language. Make sure your story doesn't leave questions in the reader's mind.

Buy or Sell

Headline Tag: Buy or Sell SLUG: BUYSELL-XXX (ANALYSIS) Named Item Code (NIC): BUYSELL/ Topic Code: ANV

The Buy or Sell headline tag, despite its name, denotes a type of news analysis that is NOT a recommendation to buy or sell a security but it is the place to offer contrasting views on the value of a company stock or the possible future path of a currency, commodity or debt instrument.

Buy or Sell should add depth to coverage of individual stocks, bonds, futures, currency plays, and market niches rather than trying to call the direction on the entire stock market, the dollar or major commodities - stories better covered in a full ANALYSIS.

Buy or Sell stories lead with a brief intro of 1 to 3 paras maximum. They may carry bullet points above the byline. The argument should then be set under separate crossheads for Buy and Sell.

Refer to data. Examples are short interest data, consensus analysis & put-call ratios for stocks; price differentials or commitments of traders data for commodities; volumes & spread trends for CDS; TradeWeb data for bonds; TR volume data for currencies.

Use direct quotes and keep reported speech to a minimum. Buy or Sell should quote credible analysts, investors or traders. Don't use sources that want to sit on the fence. This is Buy or Sell. Not Buy, Sell or Hold.

Be succinct - try to keep the story under 50 lines or 500 words.

ANALYSIS or INSTANT VIEW.

Chronology

See Timeline. Headline Tag: Chronology- SLUG: XXX-XXX (FACTBOX) A Chronology is a form of factbox listing in chronological order events related to a major news story. Keep entries to the essentials, usually no more than 10 key dates with a line or two on each. Many chronologies and individual entries are far too long. Customers want information they can use, not the history of the world. Start with the oldest information first.

A chronology does not carry a dateline but begins e.g. May 6 (Reuters) - The name of the person who compiled it and the location must be in the signoff line at the bottom of the item.

Column

Headline tag: COLUMN- unless there is product name. SLUG: COLUMN-XXX/ Topic Code: CLM

A Reuters column is a showcase for the expertise and insight of seasoned journalists who use the format to bring fresh perspectives and novel thinking to their area of specialist coverage. Columns offer extra value to our audiences by challenging assumptions, bringing clarity where there is confusion and by casting doubt on comfortable orthodoxies.

A column is opinion and is distinct from the rest of the news file in that the author is licensed to express a point of view. Each must carry a disclaimer at the top, above the byline, making clear the views they contain are not those of Reuters.

They should contain a strong argument that is properly reasoned and backed up with facts and solid reporting. It should also be fair, acknowledging the existence of other arguments or viewpoints. They should not be politically or ideologically partisan, nor should they contain invective. The column's argument should be such that if challenged it can be defended robustly and sensibly by the author.

Once appointed to cover a sector or topic columnists are free to decide their own subject matter, but close collaboration and consultation with a senior supervising editor is essential. Since columns are the work of an individual, variations between them in tone and style are welcome. Columns should only be written by dedicated columnists. The appointment of a columnist needs the approval of the Editor-in-Chief.

Curtainraisers and holding stories

Headline tag: PREVIEW SLUG: XXX-XXX (PREVIEW) Topic Code: PRE

Curtainraisers by definition are written ahead of set-piece events - meetings, visits, elections, trials, earnings, speeches etc. They carry the PREVIEW tag in the headline and (PREVIEW) after the slug. In addition to relevant topic codes for screen clients, they are also filed with a PRE topic code. If they are written in a newsworthy fashion, they stand a chance. Otherwise, clients are quite content to get the programmatic information (what, when, where, who, for how long) from our diaries and outlooks or, on a really major event, from a factbox or special advisory listing dates and times. So the basic message is: there is no such thing in Reuters as a routine curtainraiser. If your curtainraiser is going to read like an extended diary entry, then drop it. Don't do a curtainraiser if no

discernible news is going to emerge from the event. You probably are not going to need a formal curtainraiser if news is breaking regularly in the run-up to an event. A heated election campaign in its final week, for example, obviates the need for a curtainraiser if you are writing about the campaign on most days.

In all cases, consult your regional desk about your plans, including when to file.

Question the news value of any curtainraiser when you consider writing one and question whoever asks you for one about the news value. Keep it tight. Screen clients want a heads-up on what is going to happen. Media customers have a premium on space for news that has not happened yet.

Let the news, rather than the event's mechanics, tell the story. You should not stretch for an angle, but you must make your curtainraiser meaningful. Link the event you are previewing to the context in which it takes place, the related issues and the likely outcome (or lack of it). Dig for real news and talk to quotable sources to give the curtainraiser depth. A standard curtainraiser should be filed 2-3 days before the event and tell the story in a maximum of 600 words, although shorter is better. The very latest a curtainraiser should be filed is noon your desk's time on the day before the event. If you file a curtainraiser on the day of the event, you invite the spike. There is strong interest among online sites and broadcasters, usually in your own time zone, in stories filed overnight to set up something that is going to happen during the coming 24 hours.

These items give customers a head start and give you a basis on which to build your story, and thus get it out faster, when the news happens. As with curtainraisers, you should consult your regional desk about your plans.

No curtainraiser or holding story should be issued during daylight hours on the day of the event. It is a waste of effort and a wasted opportunity. Obviously, if it emerges for the first time in the morning that an event will take place later in the day and reporting it is newsworthy, you should write a story. Equally, if you have filed an overnight holding story and something newsworthy happens ahead of the event, you should update the story with the fresh news. As with all UPDATEs there should be an ADVISORY LINE under the headline telling readers what has been updated (e.g. "Adds king's quotes in third paragraph")

Dealtalk

Headline tag: DEALTALK: SLUG: XXX-XXX (DEALTALK) Topic Code: DLTK Named Item Code: DEALTALK

DEALTALK is a news story format that provides exclusive details and insight on takeover, capital-raising or financial industry developments. Such stories stories are extremely popular with our core financial clients and demonstrate our expertise and access.

DEALTALK is a perfect outlet for incremental developments in an ongoing transaction. It could be well-sourced additional information about the real story behind a deal. But remember that in mergers and acquisitions nothing is final until it's really final. DEALTALK gives us a forum to report what we're hearing as a deal progresses.

A few examples of stories that might warrant a DEALTALK: We hear from sources that terms are changing on a deal, or that bankers or buyers are getting cold feet. On an IPO, we hear that

book-building is going poorly and that bankers are discussing cutting the offer price. We may hear that a deal was a success but left bad feelings on one side.

We should write DEALTALK in a bright tone, noting views and counter views. We don't need to bog the lede down with, "â’¦sources said on Thursdayâ’¦" but can make the sourcing clear lower in the story. These pieces do need to be well sourced and defensible. We do need to be wary of banker spin. Dealmakers have agendas, so we need to be sure all viewpoints are represented and that we're not being manipulated by someone with a vested interest.

- DEALTALK is always exclusive. We will not write one from a press release or event.
- DEALTALK always includes investment banks or other financial players.
- DEALTALK is well-sourced and authoritative.
- DEALTALK is timely, well-written and engaging.

All DEALTALKs should use the DEALTALK named item code, and include a line at the top: ((For more Reuters DEALTALKs, click [DEALTALK/]). Slugging should be DEALTALK/XXX (the xx's being the subject).

Diaries

The international Diaries Desk assembles the most important items from national diaries into subject-matter diaries. National diaries should include the news codes DIA and CAL. DIA is a live code. Do not include DIA in a service message because that would take it to screen clients.

Queries to Diaries Desk should be sent CAL LON. CAL takes the diary/service message to the CALENDAR basket, which the Diaries Desk monitors. Bureaux must mark new or amended entries in national diaries with an asterisk*. Otherwise the Diaries Desk, trawling through thousands of entries, cannot know if this is a new entry. Stories announcing upcoming events such as a state visit should also be coded CAL to allow the desk to create an entry swiftly.

Diary events should be added to national diaries as soon as possible. Clients are grateful for an early warning and Reuters Editors want to know about events as early as possible for internal news planning. Diaries are either text or tabular entries. For examples of Reuters diaries, key in IND/DIARY on your Reuters 3000Xtra.

Factbox

Headline Tag: FACTBOX SLUG: XXX-XXX (FACTBOX) Topic Code: CTXT

A Factbox offers a way to present information clearly and comparatively, particularly for events such as corporate mergers. The format may vary according to the subject matter but the essential issue is that they should be short, graphic, written primarily in bulletpoint form and easy on the eye.

Basic general news background factboxes on people, countries and issues can normally run at a maximum of five key facts. Other factboxes, for example on a corporate boardroom battle or complex political procedure, may need to be done in a Q&A (Question and Answer) format. Economic and financial news lends itself to a tabular format in the factbox, listing such issues as market capitalisation, interest rate progression and various comparatives.

One possible application for P+G reporters is to look at which industry or market sectors are affected by a sudden event or policy change. The headline for such a box would be: FACTBOX-What sectors are affected by xxxx

A factbox does not have location in the dateline but begins e.g. May 6 (Reuters) -

The name of the person who compiled it and the location must be in the signoff line at the bottom

Feature

Headline tag: FEATURE SLUG: XXX-XXX (XXX-FEATURE) Topic Code: FEA

A story that takes the FEATURE tag is an insight into a trend or an issue or personality. It must be accompanied by illustrative material such as a picture, graphic, video or factbox. It is either topical or a compelling issue that would otherwise go unreported. It enlightens the reader about that trend or issue or personality in a broad context. It uses specific examples to illustrate that trend or issue and puts them in a broad framework that allows the social, economic, corporate and/or political implications to shine through, whether sectoral, national or global. A feature is essentially cross-sectoral i.e. it should appeal to anyone in a global audience of politically and financially aware readers. A feature should be no more than 800 words or about 80 lines in Lynx Editor, but exceptionally can go longer with approval from a Features Editor.

A Feature gives a correspondent the chance to report in depth and against a more relaxed deadline. Features must conform like any other story with the Reuters values of accuracy, objectivity and precise sourcing. Readability is the key but reporters who think good color writing means lacing copy with an excess of adjectives are wrong.

Make sure you are telling readers something they do not already know. Look for a newsworthy subject. Work hard on an eye-catching first paragraph.

A Feature is an example of the kind of story in which a "soft" intro may, with skill, find a place on all services. There should be no editorializing. Give the date when something happened e.g. "at a conference on March 21", so the story has some shelf life. Feature writers MUST ensure that they have approval for an outline of the story from a Features Editor before proceeding. The Features Editors can help arrange visual or text material to enrich a feature in ways that make it particularly valuable to online and screen clients. But talk with your local picture and television colleagues as well. Sometimes the Features Editor will commission a series of text features to explore a theme or issue.

The word FEATURE is the headline tag. The slugline should carry an addition in brackets categorising the type of Feature by the most appropriate subject, e.g.:

- (SCIENCE FEATURE, PICTURE)
- (POLITICAL FEATURE, PICTURE)
- (BUSINESS FEATURE, PICTURE)
- (SPORTS FEATURE, PICTURE)
- (ENVIRONMENT FEATURE, PICTURE) etc

Instant View

Headline tag: INSTANT VIEW or ANALYSTS VIEW SLUG: XXX-XXX (INSTANT VIEW)

There are two types of Instant View. They are designed to provide clients with rapid reaction from analysts and major decision makers to a significant political or financial spot breaking news story OR a diarised event, such as an economic indicator release.

Both carry the headline tag INSTANT VIEW and must carry a slug (e.g. AUSTRALIA-ECONOMY/BUDGET-VIEW (INSTANT VIEW)).

The first type compiles the views, in direct quotes, of no fewer than three analysts. It should be updated, as a normal story would be, but without the UPDATE tag, as each new entry is added. It begins with a dateline and short note describing the event or figures being analysed. Write the name, title and organisation for each commentator in upper case above his/her quote, separated by commas.

The first entry of every Instant View on economic or financial news should reach screens within 15 minutes of the event, and the series must be completed within 30 minutes. If you have interesting views from analysts that are worth filing separately but which were obtained after the permitted 15-minute gap, use the tag ANALYSTS' VIEW.

With general and political news, the INSTANT VIEW should remain updated for up to two hours and then become a FACTBOX of the 10 or so best quotes.

The purpose of the second type of Instant View is to give a one-stop shop for clients directly after data or a news event. Customers should not have to flick between items to get the whole story and the Instant is the quickest way we have to pull it all together.

The essence of these pieces is speed, so aim on big events to land them as quickly as possible. We have at most a 15-20 minute window after an event during which the market will be paying attention.

This second type of INSTANT VIEW should look like this: INSTANT VIEW 1- Ruritania industrial production rises REUTERS, Oct 1, 2004 - Ruritania industrial production rose 1.4 percent in August from July, more than expected and reinforcing a view among analysts that interest rates could rise soon. Production was 9.2 percent higher in the year through August, compared with a 7.8 percent rise in the year through July.

Key points

	August	**July**	**August Forecast**
Change vs. prior month	1.4 %	0.8 %	0.9 %
Change vs. year earlier	9.2 %	7.8 %	8.8 %

- Ruritania statistics official says strong auto production boosted August output
- Analysts say data cements the case for a rate rise at November central bank meeting

Commentary:

JOHN Q. PUNDIT, ANALYST, PROSPEROUS BANK, RURITANIA: "We thought the number was on the high side and it definitely means the central bank will want to tighten at the next meeting."

JOE H. MONEYMAKER, TRADER, INTERNATIONAL BANK, RURITANIA: "This obviously shows that the economy is firing on all cylinders. Ruritania interest rates will clearly be going up again now.: "The auto numbers show that consumer demand is showing no sign of easing. : The central bank will want to take action sooner than later."

Market Reaction:

- Dollar at 8.70 ruros vs. 8.95 before data. Ruro gets immediate boost from increased speculation of an imminent interest rate rise.

Links:

- For more data, the Ruritania statistics Web site is http://www.rurostats.org.rr/dt/=misc
- For all ruro news and data, 3000 Xtra users can click on:

Background:

- The Ruritania economy has been growing at a 6-8 percent rate for the past few years and analysts say this is unsustainable if the central bank is to meet its inflation target
- With the exception of retail sales, most of the past two months economic figures have come in on the high side of expectations. ((Ruritania newsroom +123 456 7890))

Highlights

The Highlights format is an effective way to get key quotes and facts to clients during a fast-moving news event, such as the unveiling of a budget, a monetary policy news conference or international policy events such as the G7/IMF meetings. It get news to clients quickly without forcing them to scan multiple small stories. Instead of filing urgents after alerts the snaps are covered with an XREF which directs clients to the HIGHLIGHTS item.

This format should not be confused with World News Highlights, which are summaries of the top political and general news stories produced several times a day, sometimes by editing desks, sometimes automatically.

The Highlights format can also be used when people speak at different times, such as finance ministers at a high-level meeting. Subscribers find direct quotes very valuable. Highlights are not necessarily a substitute for a story. But if there is a key news development, break it out into an

urgent. If it is a story evolving more slowly, you can wait until the end to write an update. Reporters should consult the relevant editing desk in advance if they propose to use the Highlights format, and take the desk's guidance on when to write the story.

Format

DATELINE, Feb 31 (Reuters) - Following is a selection of comments from European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet's testimony to the European Parliament on Thursday.

The intro can be turned into a news lead as the event unfolds:

For Example

DATELINE, Feb xx (Reuters) - Business must learn to live with a strong currency and cannot expect relief from policymakers, European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet told parliament on Thursday. Following are highlights of Trichet's twice-yearly testimony before the European Parliament.

- Add: THIS ITEM WILL BE UPDATED at the end.
- Use sub heads such as RATES, INFLATION, FX to group ideas
- Put an R in the "Message Type" field to refresh. In the **System 77**/**Decade** header field this is to the left of the slug, in the **Lynx** header it labelled "Message Type" with a dropdown menu of options.

HIGHLIGHTS should be refreshed frequently.

- Snaps are covered by an XREF, which allows subscribers to access the rolling HIGHLIGHTS through a double-click box.
- Change the USN frequently in a long series of snaps, so that if there is a correction, the whole sequence does not have to be repeated.
- Don't forget to use the HIGHLIGHTS tag at the start of the headline and give the item a slug with HIGHLIGHTS in brackets.

Production:

Using HIGHLIGHTS during a live news conference is fast and effective but labour intensive. One person files the snaps with a second person checking; you might need at least three people to provide quotes, depending on the event; a sub editor compiles and files the HIGHLIGHTS; and ideally yet another files XREF's to the snaps.

Editing Desks:

- Publish the first version as quickly as possible. File updates to the same USN with R to overwrite
- Insert new information at the top, saying "LATEST QUOTES" and below that "EARLIER QUOTES" divided by subject and/or by speaker
- Try to keep the more important news at the top of the "EARLIER QUOTES" section

- Capitalise the sub heads; the shorter the better
- Clean it up when the event ends to put the most important information at the top and remove THIS ITEM WILL BE UPDATED
- Watch length, with 130 lines the maximum for one take. Bear in mind that not every snap has to be slavishly covered.

XRefs

Set up the format well in advance. Text should describe the event where the person was speaking and provide a click through to the USN of the Highlights. "For quotes from Mr. Big's speech before the Big Business Association on Tuesday, Feb 31, please double click on [xxxxxxxxx] (USN) File WITHOUT a headline. If you need to change something in an XREF that has already been filed, use "O" not "R" or you will lose all of the snaps.

Taking Quotes

Be selective. Focus on the key quotes rather than trying to provide a complete transcript. If something is interesting but lengthy and has no snap, then paraphrase. If the speaker is responding to a question then include the question when it is essential to provide context. But use judgment and paraphrase the question for brevity. A brief summary such as DOLLAR OVERVALUED? is faster and more effective.

Interview

Headline tag: INTERVIEW SLUG: XXX-XXX (INTERVIEW) Topic Code: INTER

Interviews with decision makers and people in the news are an important part of the Reuters file and support our reputation by conveying exclusivity. We should reserve the use of INTERVIEW in the slugline and headline tag for substantive interviews with subjects of note and not debase it by applying it to accounts of a few questions shouted at someone in a scrum of reporters. INTERVIEW can also be used for fund management executives or star fund managers who have a major claim to fame, but not for views from fund managers.

It is essential to prepare well for an interview and to advise photographers and Reuters Video News, which may want to do the same interview. The story should say the interview subject "told Reuters" or "said in an interview".

Outstanding interviews with major figures may also use the EXCLUSIVE tag, which is reserved for stories of exceptional significance that are obtained solely by Reuters. Strong interviews of major importance may additionally be reported after the story has been written as a TEXT of Q&A excerpts. This item must repeat all the quotes, with questions, used in the main story and must also carry additional questions and answers, which may be edited. The questions and answers should be written in order.

Given the set piece nature of interviews which are usually scheduled in advance, the INTERVIEWS

are not normally updated. If an interviews subject discloses breaking news though you may want to file an Alert or Urgent sourcing the news to an interview with Reuters, and then write up the full interview later under the INTERVIEW tag.

Newsmaker/Obituary

Headline tag: NEWSMAKER or OBITUARY SLUG: XXX-XXX (NEWSMAKER) or (OBITUARY)

A profile is often written to a topical news peg. We use the tag NEWSMAKER in the headline and in brackets in the slugline. Aim for no more than 500 words (50 lines in Lynx Editor), making clear high up why this person is in the news. An OBITUARY is a Newsmaker written when the subject has died. The Newsmaker needs to be a self-contained pen-portrait. Subjects may be leading figures in politics, business, sport, arts and entertainment, science and other fields.

Aim for comprehensiveness. Personal details are essential, as are precise dates. The top half of a profile should contain a concise summary of the main points of the subject's claim to fame, with a minimum of biographical detail. The rest of the profile should review his or her career chronologically. Think colour and descriptive. Bureaux should keep Newsmakers (profiles) on prominent personalities on file and with the regional desk and the editorial reference unit. They are often needed quickly. Keeping the store regularly up to date helps when the pressure is on.

Overnight stories

No special tags or slugs. An overnighter is a way to restart a major ongoing story with a write through for the next news cycle by adding a forward looking element. It should be reserved for a story that is likely to appear on a top news page or the world news schedule. In all cases, consult your regional editing desk on when one is needed. Question the news value of an overnighter when you consider writing one and question anyone who asks you for one about the news value. Keep it tight. Normal length rules apply, but the shorter the better.

You could well be pretty tired when you sit down to write one. Don't hang around the bureau until late to write it if all the facts are in and you can write the story by mid-evening. Getting out a quality overnighter is of value to customers and rewarding for bureaux, so plan ahead to leave enough gas in the tank to be able to craft a good one. If a fresh writer is available to do it, so much the better.

It's a confusing concept since we are a 24-hour news service. It is less confusing if you approach the overnighter with a view that you are providing the story primarily for a reader in a different time zone. If they are done well, overnighters help a screen client in a place where day is breaking to read in. Newspapers where it is late afternoon will use them in their next edition if they provide a fresh take. Web sites want them to freshen their news categories at any time of day. An overnighter is:

A story that acts as a bridge between two days

You may have a big story on your patch on Tuesday and know that there is more to come on Wednesday. There may also be a big story that is moving around datelines in different time zones and needs to be taken into a new news day. In both cases, the overnighter acts as a "bridge" between two news days and in an ideal world should throw the story forward. It may not be worth the bother if the most recent update went out an hour before the date change and there is no "throw forward" angle that is stronger. Don't strain for a sexy lead or a "today" angle if you don't have one. Writing "Rescuers tore through the rubble of the national parliament in a desperate search for survivors of a bomb attack that killed 36 people" is not going to win you readers if the hardest news point is still the bomb attack. Similarly, "Manchukistan braced for fresh violence â'¦: or "A miners' strike entered its second day â'¦" or "The president prepared to â'¦" are all artificial constructs and will probably turn people off.

A story that gives a fresh take on news already in

There is no point writing "A plane crash killed 86 peopleâ'¦" in an overnighter if the crash occurred many hours earlier and all the facts are clear. People already know that. The "fresh take" approach works best on stories where all the facts are in, but it can also be an effective way to write a "bridging" overnighter if there is no obvious throw-forward angle. One fresh approach is to ask "why" and write a more analytical piece. Or you may want to lead the overnighter on a strong human interest angle. You may also have gathered details or sidebar material in the course of the day's reporting that you did not have space or time for. Consider using one or more of those elements for a fresh take in the overnighter. An overnighter takes its own USN.

Poll (Polling)

Polling is a growth industry across the media, playing to the desire to know "what the others are thinking". Reuters polls are popular with our clients, helping to strengthen the Reuters brand. Only stories on Reuters polls should have the POLL tag and the word in brackets after the slug.

Every poll story we run is an exclusive. Reuters produces polls on a variety of subjects but often they cover financial market expectations. When we report that an economic indicator or a company result was above, below or in line with expectations, how do we know? As often as not it is because a Reuters poll established the consensus view beforehand. Polls linked to a set event in the future - announcement of company results, publication of economic data, country election etc - should carry a PRE topic code. Polls on company earnings should take an EARNINGS POLL tag in the headline and in brackets after the slug.

How to poll:

- Chose a subject. It can be short term, such as economic data due next week, or long term, such as where analysts expect a stock index to end the year. It doesn't have to be a pure

numbers game. You could, for instance, ask analysts to rate the performance of your central bank governor or finance minister.

- Set your questions. They must be clear, unambiguous and fair. Leading questions, aimed at getting a pre-ordained answer, have no place in Reuters polls.
- Find respondents. Make sure they're bona fide, know what they're talking about and are willing to take part.
- Collect responses. This can be done by phone, e-mail or fax. You can usually get responses out of analysts relatively easily but polling decision makers or celebrities is much harder and time consuming.
- Analyse the responses. Bring the numbers to life with stories. Get people to justify their forecasts or views. Establishing the consensus view, if there is one, should be the target. That can be done in many ways such as calculating a mean average or median forecast for next month's inflation rate. The median, the middle forecast if you line them all up in a row, is usually preferable to the mean because it is generally less liable to distortion by forecasts which are way out of line. You should also publish the highest and lowest forecasts and the number of forecasts. Another option is the mode, which is the most frequently cited response. Excel can calculate all this for you.
- Don't ignore the mavericks. This month's minority view can become next month's conventional wisdom. Watch out for changes in expectations; why do economists now expect an interest rate cut soon whereas last month they ruled one out?
- Publish. Say when your poll was conducted as timing can influence views. Was your interest rate survey taken before or after the shock rise in inflation? The faster you publish, the less likely you'll be overtaken by events. Run individual responses when possible as transparency is vital to the credibility of our polls.

If you need any help in conducting or covering polls, give the Polling Unit a call on + 44 20 7542 5223, or e-mail polling.unit@reuters.com

Covering other organisations' polls:

Public opinion polls are often produced by reputable organisations with no axe to grind but care still needs to be taken in reporting them. Different pollsters use different methods yielding different results.

- Beware of the spin doctors: A lobby group may commission a poll from a respected organisation but then present the results selectively to support its cause.
- Voodoo polls: Beware of surveys in which participants select themselves such as in phone-in TV polls and Internet surveys. At best one side of an argument may feel more passionately about an issue than the other, meaning more of them take part. At worst, organised interest groups may rig the result.
- Watch out for commercially-motivated polls. A survey showing that all men fear going bald by 40 may be sponsored by the makers of a miracle hair restorer. We need to beware against free plugs for the sponsors in such cases.

Q&A

Headline tag: Q+A-xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx Slug: XXX-XXX/ (Q+A) This is a form of factbox used to explain complicated issues. It is a means of highlighting our depth of understanding on newsworthy themes. This item is what it says - a factbox in question and answer style.

They are:

- written in bullet point formats
- can by bylined and datelined but do not have to be.

Example:

USA-HILLARY (Q+A) Q+A-Why does Hillary Clinton keep running for president.

June 2 (Reuters) - Hillary Clinton has shrugged off calls to drop out of the U.S. Democratic presidential race and said she will keep running "until there is a nominee". Below are some questions and answers on why she is still in the race, despite her rival Barack Obama appearing to have an insurmountable lead.

Scenario boxes

Headline tag: SCENARIOS- Slug: XXX-XXX (SCENARIOS) A scenario format is a form of factbox used to throw a story forward by describing what our correspondents think are the possible outcomes of a crisis or situation. Where possible they should give some guidance on the probability of each scenario.

They are:

- written in bullet points
- can be bylined and datelined but do not need to be.

Example: THAI-CRISIS (SCENARIOS)

SCENARIOS-How might the Thai political crisis unfold

BANGKOK, Sept 1 (Reuters) - Thousands of protesters have been occupying Thai Prime Minister Samak Sundaravej's official compound since Aug. 26, vowing to remain until he and his elected government fall. Following are some scenarios for what might happen next:

Secondary

A secondary, by definition, is a story that is of secondary importance. It is written to the same standards as all stories but is usually short and seldom requires updating. A secondary may be of regional rather than global interest or a financial story of limited target interest.

Sidebar

SLUG: XXX-XXX/YYY (wild slug) A Sidebar is a spot story that is filed as a companion piece to a running "trunk" story. It may be a related Alert and Newsbreak or a basic spot news story. It may cover reaction or some other development linked with a major running story. It may be a colour story, or a historical or scene piece. Format and writing are the same as for the basic spot news story except that it may be possible only to sketch in the context and background. Any Sidebar should use the slug of the trunk story plus an additional identifier e.g. THAILAND-CARS/REACTION-

The tabular format - and bullet points - may also be considered as an option when you are planning sidebar treatment of a story. Sidebars can be updated, but this should be avoided if possible - Updates on Sidebars can cause confusion for screen readers and detract attention from the main "trunk" series.

Snap analysis

Headline tag: SNAP ANALYSIS- SLUG: XXX-XXX (SNAP ANALYSIS)

A snap analysis is a variety of Analysis usually in bullet point format. This allows us to rush out interpretation and insight in the immediate aftermath of an event without waiting for the time it will take to write a full analysis. It can be planned in advance for setpiece news or agreed quickly with an EIC once an event occurs. The insight delivered must go beyond stating the obvious. We should aim to get these out within 30 minutes of an event. These are:

- written in bullet points. At least five bullets are needed.
- can be bylined and datelined but do not have to be.
- can be divided into different areas by sub-heads.
- **Example**:

```
SAFRICA-POLITICS/RESIGNATIONS (SNAP ANALYSIS)
SNAP ANALYSIS - Departures raise doubts over S.Africa transition
     Sept 23 (Reuters) - The resignation of some key South African ministers alongside President
prospects for a smooth transition.
     Below are some of the possible consequences of the move:
```

Snapshot

A SNAPSHOT is a quick read-in tool for screen and media clients on a major political or general news story of global interest that extends over several days or weeks and has many elements, often from different datelines. Its format will vary with the story but the SNAPSHOT is generally no longer than a page of A4 and written in bulletpoint form.

It can list latest developments, key quotes, main statistics and forthcoming events linked to the story. A SNAPSHOT can assume that the reader has a general understanding of the story and therefore dispense with most background, including first names of known players. A SNAPSHOT is regularly updated throughout a news day when developments occur. There are no fixed times of issues. A SNAPSHOT should not be compiled on any given story without a decision by the relevant regional editor. In commodities news, a SNAPSHOT is a regular compilation of various reports in

specific markets with click links to the individual reports.

Spot story

The basic spot news story is the mainstay of the Reuters file. Write it quickly, clearly and simply. Say what happened and why we are reporting it, in language that is easy to translate. Put the news in context with quotes, colour and background. Remember Reuters core values of accuracy, speed and objectivity and be precise with sourcing. A lively, well-contexted and self-contained spot story is often all that is needed on a secondary development. Do not update for the sake of it - only on merit. If the story is updated, the first version of the story should remain on the screen. The Update, if any, would carry a different Unique Story Number. Any further Updates would replace the previous Update in the series, but the first story should not be replaced.

Table

Tabular presentation after an Alert, whether of corporate results, economic indicators, bond issues or commodities data, is often the quickest way to supply a specialist market the key numbers it needs. As with Newsbreaks, Tables must be filed within 10 minutes of the Alert - more quickly if possible. A quick Newsbreak is often essential after the Table is filed when a story is particularly newsworthy. Some Alerts of strictly specialist interest may be covered by a Table and not require textual treatment, i.e. not every Alert needs to be covered by a Newsbreak. Like all stories, the Table requires a slug.

The results of any political election of international interest must also be filed as a Table - either once at the end of the count or regularly updated throughout the count depending on how important the vote is.

Guidelines for Tables:

- Clearly label tables. Use the TABLE headline tag.
- **In System 77/Decade**, unfailingly include "T" in the header field.
- Write an active headline highlighting the main news point.
- **In Lynx Editor,** place the cursor where you want the table to go and click on the "Add Table" button. Format the table using the dialog box.
- Organise Tables logically and neatly.
- An opening paragraph may define the contents and can sometimes shift words out of the tabular section and avoid clutter e.g. "OPEC monthly oil output (in millions of barrels per day)."
- Alignment is crucial. Try to keep the right margin straight and decimal points aligned.
- Align columns and headings by their left margins only if they are all or almost all text.
- Try to keep columns equally spaced with at least two spaces (preferably three) between words and numbers in adjacent columns. Tables do not necessarily follow the one-page rule (check desks for guidance).

On a complicated story or where a large number of figures are involved, key numbers can be sent in a first page of a Table within the required time limit. A second page may be filed as soon as possible later to complete the table.

Text

Clients often want to read the text of a major announcement or speech. We should say in the lead paragraph whether it is a full or a partial text. Use TEXT (not FULL TEXT) as a headline tag.

If the original is in a language other than English, say so, and whether this is an official or Reuters translation. It may be necessary to file a TEXT item in more than one "take" (page). If this is necessary, use the same slug but add a page number to the headline of the item, preceded by an equal sign (e.g. "TEXT-Ruritanian president =2") Strong interviews of major importance may additionally be reported after the story has been written as a TEXT of Q&A excerpts. This item must repeat all the quotes, with questions, used in the main story and must also carry additional questions and answers, which may be edited. The questions and answers should be written in order.

Timeline

A Timeline is a form of sidebar listing in chronological order events related to a major news story. Keep entries to the essentials, usually no more than 10 key dates with a line or two on each. Many timelines and individual entries are far too long. Customers want information they can use, not the history of the world. Start with the oldest information first.

A timeline has no dateline and begins with the date e.g. May 6 (Reuters) -

The name of the person who compiled it and the location must be in the signoff line at the bottom of the item.

Top News summaries

Top News pages are the "front page" for many of our screen services. They are among the most retrieved items and offer a chance for us to highlight the main stories, help clients with navigation and promote other parts of the service.

Expert news judgment is required when choosing headlines and arranging the running order. The summaries must also adhere to a uniform format, regardless of their subject matter or where they are produced. Aim for no more than 12 stories.

Senior editors must take responsibility for Top News pages. They must be uniform. All stories should be accessible to users permissioned for them. All cross-references should work and take users to the intended instrument or directory. Stories must be carefully selected and categorised clearly and sensibly, usually with the most significant story first if not the latest. An Analysis section should be used. Coding protocols must be observed. A TOP NEWS checklist:

- All TOP NEWS summaries must have the following codes in the header field: the topic codes TOP, GLANCE, XREF; a unique USN; an R in the Message Type/Ref field; the GLANCE/XXX named item code in the RIC field; the TOP/XXX named item code in the NI field. *The **Lynx Editor** header also has fields marked "Message Type", "Named Item" "RICs" etc.*
- The TOP NEWS summary headline must appear in upper and lower case.
- TOP NEWS in the headline must be preceded and closed by a single asterisk.
- The related markets links toolbar, must always appear at the top of a TOP NEWS summary beneath the main TOP NEWS summary headline.
- Vertical bars | must be used to visually group the links within the toolbar.
- Never write an introduction to the news headline in the TOP NEWS summary.
- Story headlines should be grouped by one to four categories, and the first must always have the label "Top Stories" while any others can change depending on the amount and type of news on offer.
- Aim for 12 story headlines within a single TOP NEWS summary.
- Category labels must be written in upper case, story headlines must be written in upper and lower case.
- Each story headline must be preceded with a > symbol.
- Never text wrap a story headline to a second line, always truncate using ellipses.
- Dynamic Cross reference links to real-time news and prices must be grouped under the labels UP-TO-THE-MINUTE HEADLINES and LIVE PRICES & DATA.
- Some summaries may not include LIVE PRICES & DATA (e.g. the TOP NEWS for Sports).
- Never exceed more than 2 columns of 2 cross reference links within a cross reference links category i.e. UP-TO-THE-MINUTE HEADLINES.
- The static links to Speedguides at the bottom of a TOP NEWS summary should never change.

*In **Lynx Editor** for the moment, use the existing glance application to cut and paste headlines and USNs into a Glance or Take-A-Look. Eventually a "Merge Headlines" function will be available as a more automated option.*

For examples of TOP NEWS summaries, key in TOP on your Reuters 3000Xtra.

Witness

A Witness story is a first-person account by a Reuters journalist of an experience, a set of observations or an event in which he or she has participated. It can relate to the subject matter the journalist covers but it is not limited to such fields. Many of our staff experience extraordinary and unusual things in the course of their reporting. Their work gives them unique perspectives on other human beings and their behaviour. In our own lives we undergo hardships, trials or good fortune. These things are all the stuff of Witness stories. They are individual accounts of experiences and are an opportunity for the writer to express personality, feeling and engagement. They are not vehicles for opinion, prejudice or partisanship. Reuters standards of impartiality and accuracy apply. Reuters journalists working for text, picture, video and online services have all written Witness pieces. They are slugged WITNESS-XX/, start with the headline tag WITNESS, and are accompanied by an Advisory giving some background on the author and his or her story. They should be illustrated by an image of the author and ideally by pictures appropriate to the subject matter. All Witness stories should be discussed with regional editors, who will supervise their

production.

Wrapup

A WRAPUP is a one-stop shop for clients offering a broad snapshot of the latest developments in a top story of the day. It is a synthesis of significant news developments with the necessary context, colour, background and reaction, not a long list of everything that was said and done. The WRAPUP tag in the headline and after the slug flags these stories to clients. Desks will consult bureaux on when a WRAPUP is appropriate and where to write it. The desk and bureaux should also consult when a change of dateline is appropriate, or when an overnight WRAPUP is needed.

A Wrapup should:

- Pull together news from more than one dateline or story. It is not just the last Update in a series. It is meant to pull together more than one series of updates from different datelines on the same broad subject, or pull together more than one series of updates from the same dateline but on different strands of the broad story.
- Carry the dateline/by-line of the writer with the strongest story.
- Lead on the hardest news and weave in significant developments from other datelines/stories high up - the top 35 lines.
- Be no more than 800 words or about 80 lines in Lynx Editor.
- Follow the news to a fresh dateline as a story develops.
- Be freshened in light of new developments
- Be refined and improved as it is freshened to sharpen the headline and top five paragraphs.
- Bring in essential background, analysis, colour and context and cut out any material that is no longer required each time it is freshened.

A Wrapup should not:

- Include secondary material that is not essential for the reader's understanding.
- Be freshened if there are no new developments unless it can be refined and improved.
- Be written separately when we can take the main strand of a story, tag that WRAPUP rather than UPDATE and weave in developments from elsewhere. Desks will consult bureaux and decide when this is the case.

Use the word (WRAPUP) in the slugline and the headline tag WRAPUP. Wrapups follow the same slugging and tag style as UPDATEs, - i.e. they start with WRAPUP 1, then WRAPUP 2, WRAPUP 3. The practice of replacing earlier Updates on with the latest update applies to Wrapups. Fresh Wrapups must retain the significant factual material in earlier Wrapups to ensure there is no loss of content when stories are deleted and to enable us to correct any errors in previous copy.

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 17:05, 24 January 2012.

The Desk

Contents

- 1 General
  - 1.1 Tasting
  - 1.2 Sub-editing
  - 1.3 Filing
  - 1.4 Bureau support
  - 1.5 Product management
  - 1.6 Single/Multi-take filing
- 2 Direct injection
- 3 Filing your story to the desk
- 4 Filing to Desk
- 5 Desk hours of operation
- 6 Black hole filing
  - 6.1 Method 1
  - 6.2 Method 2

General

Strong, engaged desks are critical to the success of our file and help drive it with the news editors. Editing stories is a highly valued skill and some of our best journalists belong on desks. Everyone who touches a story is responsible and accountable for its contents.

There is no room on our desks for those who do not have ideas, and there is no room in our bureaux for reporters who don't accept constructive ideas, guidance and feedback. We're all on the same team.

The basic task of the desk is to ensure that all stories comply with our principles and procedures, as well as to help shape the overall file, whether on a particular story or across regions and disciplines. Deskers must also see themselves - and reporters must see deskers - as facilitators, ensuring that value is added to our reporting resources. The desk's job is to guide the story as it emerges from the field.

Deskers must ensure that stories are prioritised, that they are properly sourced, that they are presented in a way that is clear, useful and attractive, and that they are fair and do not expose Reuters to legal dangers.

The desk provides an outsider's perspective that can be useful to reporters, who can sometimes become too close to a story, assume too much knowledge of the reader, or miss the regional or cross-sector implications of a news development.

Deskers are guardians of the Reuters style. A good desker is a mentor for less experienced reporters. A great desker "coaches" rather than "fixes".

Deskers, like reporters, need to be familiar with the story, which means they must "read in" each day and follow the news. Typos and grammar may be corrected or improved without reference to reporters but significant changes to the factual content, interpretation, or structure of a story must be referred to the reporter before the story is filed if possible. Failure to do so puts the desker at risk of adding errors to stories. These are some of the main desk functions:

Tasting

A taster or slot desker assesses incoming copy. The primary role is to give priority to urgent news. The taster decides which stories can be filed quickly with little extra work, which need some attention, and which ones are so problematic they need referral back to the reporter. Alerts and Newsbreaks which can be quickly filed to clients are checked for accuracy, fairness, typos, grammar and format and filed by the taster. Longer stories or stories which need more work are transferred to a desker to edit.

Sub-editing

Copy editors working on stories that need more attention often approach them in two or three stages. First, the copy editor reads the story for logical structure, which may result in relocating a buried lead, or buried sourcing, or context that explains the significance of the story. Second, then the copy editor should assess accuracy and fairness, which includes checking key facts, sourcing, context, and legal dangers. Third, the copy editor checks the story for typos and grammar, running spellcheckers, checking the math, checking RICs and Web site addresses, as well as the dateline and the USN (Unique Story Number).

To meet the speed needs of real time clients, deskers should seek to fix early updates in a series quickly if possible by either deleting problematic copy or writing around it and filing the story. Then they should go back to the reporter with suggestions for improving the next update. Reporters who update stories should work from edited copy. That way, the sub-editor will only have to check any changes or additions rather than re-edit the whole story.

Where possible the same copy editor should handle a full update series so they know the issues, but copy editors taking over a trunk story should take care to "read in" to minimize the chances of introducing errors.

Filing

The copy editor is usually the filer also, checking the codes to ensure the story reaches all clients who need it. The filer has the final say on coding, deciding which clients see what stories. He or she also checks the headline and slug before filing the story. Finally the filer must check to ensure the story actually landed on the relevant services. Where a desker has done a full rewrite of the story, it

is good practice to ask another desker to provide a second pair of eyes and file the story.

Bureau support

Desks help drive the file and often assist reporting team editors or bureau chiefs in co-ordinating cross-market stories or stories that affect more than one country or region. Deskers may also be asked to write breaking news updates, wrapups or news summaries occasionally as well as monitor news sources such as web sites and broadcasters. Deskers are also encouraged to reinforce bureaux on big stories, just as reporters are encouraged to spend time on desks.

Product management

Desks have a product management role also. In addition to checking that stories filed have been received by the target audience, they are responsible for corrections and such presentation items such as advisories and take-a-looks.

Single/Multi-take filing

Stories are to be filed in a single take (page) in nearly all circumstances. Occasionally, however, a second take is necessary, most commonly to add cross-reference informationIn such cases, the second take uses the same Unique Story Number. USN RICs

Direct injection

Most English language stories are filed through one of the main editing desks. Designated staff in bureaux and on reporting units may publish Alerts, using Lynx Editor, Lynx Alerting or Wire Engine software.

Under no circumstances may a reporter publish a story directly to clients without a "second pair of eyes", preferably a senior reporter.

The regional desk retains overall responsibility for the quality of any "self published" or directly injected items and publishing rights may be removed from reporters who abuse them or do not use them with proper skill. Arrangements for self publishing or direct injection to the wire must be made with the relevant filing desk. As a general rule, anything beyond an a Brief or Urgent must be filed by an editing desk.

Corrections to any directly injected items should also be handled by the regional desk.

Filing your story to the desk

Some simple checks before sending your story for editing that will help move your story through an editing desk more quickly:

- Re-read the story - Before sending copy to a desk, reporters should re-read their story, particularly the lead, to ensure that all important information is at the top, including context that explains the story's significance. RICs should be checked. A check should also be made for typos and grammatical errors.

- Use a second pair of eyes - Ask a colleague in your bureau to read the story carefully to ensure that it is adequately sourced, accurate and fair, and written as concisely as possible. Your colleague must be critical. Most errors or problems can be caught in the bureau.

- Involve your bureau chief or an editor in charge in problem stories - Problematic stories should be copyedited by a senior reporter, bureau charge or editor in charge.

- In Lynx Editor software, the story is moved to a desk or bureau by using the TRANSFER button at the top of the Lynx Editor screen and choosing an option from the dropdown menu to move a story to a desk TASTE basket. There is also a keyboard shortcut: Ctrl + T will send the story to your default transfer basket or Alt+ T will open the dropdown menu.

- Make sure you are available to handle queries - After filing the story, remain available to handle queries from the desk. If you must leave the bureau before your story is handled, make sure to provide a contact phone number.

- Send a Skedline - If you plan to advance a story, file a skedline. Try to send sidebars, Updates etc. to same filing desk as original story - this helps improve co-ordination.

Filing to Desk

In Lynx Editor, reporters file to a regional editing desk by using the TRANSFER button to send the story to the desk e.g. EMEA-P&G-TASTE or AMERS-REASURY-TASTE.

Even if permissioned for access to editing desk TASTE or EDIT baskets, reporters should NOT open a story in edit mode in an editing desk taste basket as it prevents editors from handling the story in a timely way and often causes confusion on busy desks.

If a reporter needs a story returned, he/she should screentop or phone the desk and ask for it to be sent back to his/her reporting team or bureau edit basket to work on. In Lynx Editor, stories cannot be returned to a reporter's personal basket as there is only one live version at any time.

Desk hours of operation

Reporters must be aware of desk hours of operation and their key telephone numbers. Desk staffers should be aware of operating hours of desks in other regions and key contact phone numbers.

The fastest way to contact editing desks is to use the screentop messaging system in Lynx Editor. However, email is acceptable also.

Black hole filing

Method 1

- Write story in MS Word or Notepad or some such
- Open website http://file.reuters.com/
- Log in with the username you have been given for the purpose
- Fill in address code(s), slug, headline. **Note:** You cannot file to the wire, only to a taste or service basket
- Cut and paste story into story field (You can write directly in the story field itself, but if the connection is lost for any reason, the story will not be saved)
- Transmit

Method 2

- Open your personal e-mail account (Hotmail or Gmail or whatever) and write the story in the **compose mail** page.
- The subject field should be the address code YLP (or YAS, YEH, LCE, LCF etc) space # space BC-SLUG (and all in caps). For example: YLP # BC-MANCHUKISTAN. If you want to send it to more than one code: YLP PAR ISL # BC-MANCHUKISTAN
- Send the story to file@reuters.com.

It should appear in a taste or service basket in a minute or so. If you there is a mistake in the code or format, you will get a message from **Reuters Blackhole Filing** telling you what is wrong.

The most common errors are omitting the space between the codes, between the codes and hash sign, or the space between the hash sign and the slug, and not putting it all in caps.

If you are in a place with poor comms, write the story in MS Word or Notepad offline, log into your e-mail and then cut and paste the story into the **compose mail** page.

For more on Black hole filing, see:
http://www.ime.reuters.com/julius_learning/sections/opsmanual/manualops_section6.asp#blackwebsite

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 22:13, 15 February 2012.

Corrections, Refiles, Kills, Repeats and Embargoes

Contents

- 1 General
- 2 Corrections and Procedures
  - 2.1 Alerts and Newsbreaks
  - 2.2 Correcting stories with no Alert
- 3 Correcting stories in Lynx
- 4 Correcting stories more than 24 hours old
- 5 Blogs
- 6 Official Corrections
- 7 Refiles - Procedures
- 8 Kills (Withdrawals) - Procedures
  - 8.1 Suspect Story
  - 8.2 Suspect story requires correction
- 9 Embargoes
  - 9.1 General
  - 9.2 Minimising the risk of an embargo break
  - 9.3 What to do when an embargo is broken
  - 9.4 Accidental release to Reuters screens
  - 9.5 Mending fences on embargo breaks
- 10 Appendix
  - 10.1 When to Correct
  - 10.2 When to Refile
  - 10.3 When to repeat

General

Reuters is totally honest about errors. We rectify them promptly and clearly. We do not disguise or bury mistakes in subsequent updates or stories. We repeat stories only when running them without any change from the original.

Many corrections can be prevented by checking simple things - the day of the week, proper names and figures, for example. For a list of checks see Avoiding Errors.

Reuters recognises three classes of errors and has set up three separate procedures to deal with them.

- STORY WITHDRAWN -- The so-called "kill" is reserved for stories that are totally wrong or so fundamentally flawed that a conventional correction is impossible. A desk head or specialist editor must decide whether to kill a story or correct it.

- CORRECTED - Corrections are necessary whenever a substantive, factual error appears in a story or table. Such errors include mistakes that alter the meaning or significance of the story or passage, or undermine its credibility. Stories merit corrections, for example, when they contain a wrong RICs (Reuters Instrument Code) because the mistake links the news to the wrong company. Errors involving numbers almost always merit corrections. See the appendix for more examples.
- REFILE - Refiles allow Reuters to recognise and correct minor factual errors in stories without burying them in repeats or unnecessarily alarming readers. Such minor errors in general would have no bearing on any investment decision or understanding of the news, nor would they detract from a story's credibility. Stories usually merit refiles, for example, when the wrong day of the week is included in the first sentence, when typos appear in common words or when a name is misspelled. A refile may only be published by the most senior member of staff on the appropriate desk. See the appendix for more examples.
- REPEAT - Repeats are reserved for stories that have previously appeared on a Reuters news service and do not contain errors. A story is repeated exactly as it first appeared. If the headline or text has been changed for any reason, then it is not a repeat, and the proper story format needs to be used, such as correction, refile or an update. Repeats (or updates) should never be used to overwrite mistakes or inaccuracies.

Minor factual errors and typos are addressed as refiles, not repeats. See the appendix for more examples.

The revised story or withdrawal advisory can be prepared by the reporter or bureau but must be issued by the appropriate desk, even if the original was directly injected by the bureau. The final decision on whether to issue a withdrawal, correction, refile or repeat rests with the editing desk or specialist editor, based on the approaches outlined below.

There is one exception to this rule: alerts and briefs injected using the Wire Engine can be corrected at source. To do otherwise may unduly delay a corrected item reaching clients. In these cases, a second pair of eyes must be available to the corrector, the desk must be informed and the desk remains responsible for checking the correction and deleting the incorrect item(s). If a reporter using the Wire Engine is working alone, in any doubt about how to phrase a correction, or wondering whether a withdrawal or refile is more appropriate, he or she should go through the desk as usual.

When correcting errors that first occurred in an earlier update of a series, you must note that the error first occurred in a particular update. If you have a further update after a CORRECTED story, it should carry a new USN and should NOT replace the corrected story. This means the correction will remain visible on the screens. For example, if an UPDATE 4 was corrected, UPDATE 5 would carry a new USN to ensure that clients continued to see CORRECTED-UPDATE 4.

In RAM, all corrections should be sent with the CXN address code.

Trashlines or advisory lines at the top of the text are mandatory for all withdrawals, corrections, refiles and repeats and must be filed within parentheses. The trashline should say exactly why a story is being killed, corrected, refiled or repeated. All trashlines on refiles and corrections must include the word "corrects" or "correcting". Trashlines serve the interests of transparency and are required to route our stories properly to some customers. They are technical as well as editorial tools.

Corrections and Procedures

Alerts and Newsbreaks

- An incorrect Alert must be followed by a corrected Alert with a NEW USN and the word CORRECTED- manually inserted at the beginning of the text. The corrected Alert should state clearly in parentheses what is being corrected. If this would make it much too long, an explanation should be given at the top of the Newsbreak. Example: CORRECTED-TRANSMENIAN INDUSTRIES YEAR NET PROFIT 5.4 MLN EUROS (NOT 4.5 MLN)
- The incorrect Alert should then be manually deleted from the screens.
- If the incorrect Alert is part of a series of Alerts chained together with the same USN, the correct Alerts can be repeated to chain with the corrected Alert, but they must be preceded by RPT-. Alerts should be repeated in this manner only if the series is very recent and particularly significant.
- If the Newsbreak has not yet been filed, file it with the same USN as the corrected Alert. The Newsbreak should include a trashline explaining the error and using the term "alert". This procedure applies even when the Newsbreak is correct or when the erroneous alert is not covered in the body of the Newsbreak.
- If the Newsbreak has been filed and is correct, resend it as a REPEAT to chain with the corrected Alert as it would have been deleted. Again, include a trashline explaining the error in the alert. Do not put an R in the message type of a Newsbreak that is being repeated to cover a corrected Alert because it will overwrite the Alerts.
- If the Newsbreak has been filed and is incorrect, resend it as a CORRECTED to chain to the corrected Alert, manually inserting CORRECTED- in the headline. Write (CORRECTED) in the slug line.
- Correct the headline if that is also wrong.

Example of a corrected Newsbreak: Slug BALDONIA-TRADE (CORRECTED) Headline CORRECTED- Baldonia Jan-June trade surplus falls Advisory Line (Corrects fourth paragraph to state that the surplus in June fell 16.6 percent to 985 billion euros and not fell 17.7 percent to 999 billion)

There is no need to include the headline in such advisory notes except when the headline is being corrected. Keep advisory notes (trashlines) as simple as possible to avoid confusing the reader. Paraphrase and summarise information in a trashline whenever possible but repeat the exact wording of the corrected sentence or segment if necessary. Do not include a line saying a corrected repetition follows, as that is obvious.

Here are some examples of advisory lines (trashlines):

(Corrects paragraph 2, which erroneously described ABC Co as the largest widget maker in Manchukistan. ABC Co is the second largest behind QRS Corp)

(In paragraph 6, the word "not" was dropped from the quote. Please read the sentence correctly as "The economy is not growing," John Doe said.)

Correcting stories with no Alert

The corrected story should have the same USN as the original story. It should have an A in the "Ref" or "Msg Type" field in the header on System 77 and Decade. This will delete the original story and insert the corrected one. It will also generate the word CORRECTED at the front of the headline, so there is no need to shorten the headline.

Correcting stories in Lynx

Correcting a story in Lynx Editor automatically updates certain metadata elements:

- (CORRECTED) is added after the slug
- CORRECTED is inserted at the start of the headline
- A new USN is generated
- The message type changes to A
- Lynx inserts an advisory line at the start of the story.

To create a corrected version, select the story in a published basket and click the "Correct" button at the top of the Lynx Editor window. In the case of an alert, clicking the "Correct" button calls up a "Chain Correction" dialog box with a series of options: correction, refile, repeat, withdrawal. If there is a series of alerts, it allows selection of those to which the actions apply.

Correcting stories more than 24 hours old

Stories over 24 hours old will no longer have a valid USN and so will not respond to "A" in the Ref/Msg Type field, so follow this procedure to correct a Newsbreak that is more than 24 hours old. Use a new USN and insert CORRECTED at the beginning of the headline. Delete the story from the Newsyear database using the following procedure.

1. Make a copy of the correction. Make sure it has the old USN.
2. Add a Y to the Message Type/Ref Field
3. In the Q Codes field type date and time of the original story, recalculating the RT time for GMT as follows: 18-MAY-1999:19:33:20 (for a story filed EDT at 15:33:20). This should fill the entire field. (The date and time are below stories on Kobra)
4. Remove the headline, RICS and all the copy
5. Make two spaces in the text field with the space bar
6. Make a hard (wineglass) return
7. File
8. Call up the story again on Kobra to ensure that the database has been cleaned out

(**Note:** The Q field may not appear on the header you use; check with your techs)

Blogs

If a post needs a correction, strike out the incorrect material, then immediately afterwards write the corrected word or phrase in brackets. Add CORRECTED after the headline of the post.

If the correction is relatively minor, you can simply write the correct word or phrase after the section that has been struck through.

It is acceptable to fix minor misspellings without leaving a record. However, if you misspell the name of, for example, a company or person, correct it throughout the story and the headline if need be.

At the bottom of the story, write a correction such as the following:

(CORRECTION: The first name of Irish Foreign Minister Micheal Martin was misspelled Michael in the original version of this story.)

If you update a post, add UPDATED after the headline. In the body of the post, add the update in brackets where it belongs:

Most of the cash was used to repurchase stock from executives and employees (UPDATE: Moneyblog reports that all of the proceeds were used for that purpose)

Alternatively, you can link to an updated story:

Jim Johnson has joined Cloudnine Capital, a London-based buyout firm, Reuters has learned. Johnson was previously a managing director at Clunker Associates for 11 years. (UPDATE: I spoke to Johnson and posted more info here.)

If you need to correct a headline, add a line at the bottom of the post describing how it was changed.

(CORRECTION: The headline that appeared on the original version of this story incorrectly suggested that Silvio Berlusconi was shortlisted for the Nobel Peace Prize)

Official Corrections

Special provisions are made for official corrections - those from a source, over which Reuters has no control. This is to make clear to subscribers where the responsibility for the mistake lies.

We only describe a correction as official if a source has acknowledged that the original information was wrong. If in doubt, refer to specialist editors. The only change from the standard correction format is to manually add the word (OFFICIAL) followed by a hyphen to the Alert and the headline of the Newsbreak. The slug takes (CORRECTED, OFFICIAL).

How to issue an official correction to a snap

1. Use a DIFFERENT USN from the original Alert
2. Type CORRECTED-(OFFICIAL) - and then the text of the Alert, all in upper case
3. Delete the original Alert
4. Chain the Newsbreak to the Alert, again using CORRECTED-(OFFICIAL)- before the headline if the Newsbreak is also being corrected
5. In both cases, CORRECTED-(OFFICIAL)- must be manually inserted. Do not put an A in the Ref/Msg type box of the header field.

Example: Corrected Alert CORRECTED-(OFFICIAL)-GERMAN FINMIN-NO NEED REVISE 2001 43.7 (NOT 46.1) BLN DM DEFICIT GOAL Corrected headline and story CORRECTED-(OFFICIAL)-Germany sees no reason to raise 2001 borrowing Advisory line (Please read in first paragraph, 43.7 billion marks instead of 46.1 billion marks to comply with an official correction from finance ministry)

Refiles - Procedures

Note that slugs for both refiles and corrections use (CORRECTED) as part of the slug.

The slug line would read: HEALTH-INSURANCE (CORRECTED). Headline The word REFILE appears in upper case before the headline, with a dash and no spaces separating them. For example, "REFILE-XYZ Co posts first-quarter earnings."

There must be an advisory line (trashline) above the story text telling readers what is being corrected. Follow the same procedures for writing trashlines for refiles as you would for corrections.

Back to top

REPEATS - PROCEDURES Repeats should always be issued with (REPEAT) at the end of the slug line and RPT- at the front of the headline.

The slug line would read: HEALTH-INSURANCE (REPEAT) The headline would read: RPT-XYZ Co reports first-quarter earnings.

There must be an advisory line above the story text explaining why the story is being repeated.

The advisory line would read, for example: (Repeats to widen distribution)

Kills (Withdrawals) - Procedures

Suspect Story

If a story is suspected of being wrong, but we cannot immediately confirm this, we need to send an Advisory to clients. Send it to the same codes used for the story in question but with a different USN.

For example, send a headline along these lines: ADVISORY-Ruritania President-report being checked

Slug: BC-RURITANIA-PRESIDENT (ADVISORY URGENT) In the text field, say something along these lines: With reference to the story headlined "Ruritanian president reported badly hurt in car crash", we are checking a report that the president was not in the car.

Suspect story requires correction

If the story turns out to need only a correction, send a CORRECTED with the same USN as the original story and A in the header field.

If the story is fundamentally flawed, send an ADVISORY saying the story is wrong and is withdrawn. It should state the reasons for the withdrawal and have the same address codes as the original, the same USN, a message type of R and the topic code WDW. This ensures the erroneous item will be deleted from real-time products and that there is a link (same USN) between the advisory and the story to be killed which will allow the withdrawn story to be removed from the longer-term database used for machine-readable news. Please also include the GMT time and date (in DD/MM/YYYY format) when the original item ran and also include its USN explicitly in the text. The GMT time can be worked out from the Xtra timestamp.

Headline: ADVISORY-Ruritania president story withdrawn **Slug:** BC-RURITANIA-PRESIDENT (URGENT) (STORY WITHDRAWN) **Advisory line (trashline):**

Please be advised that the Ruritania story reporting that the president was hurt in a car crash is wrong. The president's spokesman says the president was delayed and did not make the car journey as planned. The following story has been withdrawn.

STORY_NUMBER: L0987654

STORY_DATE: 19/02/2006

STORY_TIME: 1610 GMT

A substitute story follows.

In rare cases the Advisory would say: "There will be no substitute story." This would be the case, for example, when the story was totally wrong, e.g. if the car never left.

In the special case where an alert needs to be withdrawn and the advisory on this also needs to be alerted, a slightly different procedure must be followed. In this case, the alert(s) should be sent on a new USN and the withdrawn snap(s) deleted. The newsbreak that covers the advisory snap should then be repeated to the old USN as well, to ensure a link between the advisory and the withdrawn item. This different procedure is required because R does not work reliably on priority 1 items. The advisory should contain the USN, date and time information as in the example above.

In addition to these steps, an email must be sent to **RCOM Editorial** telling them what has been done.

This will alert our online colleagues to pull each version of the story from websites and to contact online customers to ask them to remove it.

Killing or withdrawing a story is a serious situation. No story should be killed or withdrawn without consulting a desk editor and specialist editor. The bureau chief may also be required to write an Incident Report to the regional specialist editor.

Embargoes

General

Institutions and organisations with information to convey will often give it to news services ahead of the official release time so as to give journalists time to prepare their stories - as in the case of a lengthy report - or to level the competitive and regulatory playing field - as with financial numbers.

Embargoes can be confusing. It is bad news when they are broken and can cost us access in the future to information critical to our clients, such as key economic indicators.

There are two kinds of embargo - the transmission embargo and the publication embargo. Make sure you know the difference.

- With a transmission embargo the source of the information provides it to us on the understanding that no story will be transmitted to any of our clients until a specified time.
- A publication embargo permits us to transmit a story immediately to wholesale media clients but with an advisory line telling them it may not be published or broadcast before a specified time. This means we cannot send such items to screen clients or internet news sites but only issue them on our media wires. These must carry the topic code EMB so they can be excluded from certain systems.

If we obtain, independently, news that is the subject of material already transmitted under embargo, we should issue our own un-embargoed story based on that source. Once an embargo has expired we should, if appropriate, follow this up with an Update adding in any material received under embargo. Our knowledge of an embargo must not inhibit attempts we have previously set in train to pursue a story.

Minimising the risk of an embargo break

Bureaux sending embargoed material to a desk must clearly mark it as embargoed in three places, in UPPER CASE.

- In the slugline (System77 and Lynx Editor) or Cy-Slug line (Decade).
- At the top of the text, above the dateline.
- In the comment line of the header field.

The desk should fill in the auto-release time and date in the editorial system header as soon as the story lands, and before it is edited. Our editing systems allow stories to be released more than 72 hours ahead, but it is a good idea not to issue stories too far in advance. Before transferring the story to an editor, make sure it is labelled EMBARGOED. If the auto-release time is midnight of the day you are handling the story, ensure that the time is entered as 00:00:01 of the FOLLOWING day. Do not enter the time as 2400 on the current day. Otherwise the system will read it as the previous midnight and the story will appear on screens immediately.

- *In **Lynx Editor,** to set a transmission embargo, display the embargo field by clicking the Metadata Display button near the top right of the story header. This opens a Metadata window with an embargo checkbox. (The embargo field can be made visible permanently by clicking Configure Defaults and adding it to Preferences.) In the embargo header field, click the Set button and enter the release date and time.*

In the Americas, the release time for stories meant for Americas only is expressed in EDT or EST depending on the time of year (e.g. "embargoed for release at 19:10 EST"). Stories filed from the Americas to international services should also add the GMT release time, in italics and highlighted e.g. â'¦19.10 EST (2301 GMT).

Do not work on a copy of the original item that carried the auto-release time - the auto-release will not be copied into your header. Also, any information in the header field may be stripped off if the story is sent to another editing desk.

Whoever transmits an embargoed item should check the transmission queue to ensure it has been transmitted. If the auto-release time is outside the desk's control period, the exact headline and the embargo time must be mentioned in the handover. It may also be a good idea to pass on a copy of the embargoed item to the desk that is taking over, just in case the embargo is broken after the handling desk close.

If you need to change, release early, or kill an embargoed item this can be done, although in some centres this may involve intervention by systems administrators. Stories issued to the media under an embargo should carry the word EMBARGOED in brackets after the slug and give the release time and date in brackets on a separate line between headline and dateline.

In the U.S., material under publication embargo should be sent to the code WIB to allow for handling by the online desk.

Examples of a media publication embargoed items:

BC-BALDONIA-SOLDIERS (EMBARGOED)

Baldonian president honours five dead soldiers

(Embargoed for release at 2301 GMT April 28)

BALDONIA CITY, April 28 (Reuters) - Baldonian President Sanoloo Shiprash called five soldiers killed in a guerrilla ambush heroes of the nation on Thursday.

Do not use the word midnight to describe the release time for stories on publication embargo. It can cause confusion about whether you mean the start or end of the day. If it is a midnight GMT embargo, use 0001 GMT, with the date.

Embargoed stories should, when practicable, be issued to media subscribers shortly before the start of the news day in which they will be required, but generally not more than 12 hours ahead of scheduled publication unless the story is unusually long or complicated, when more time should be allowed. They must carry the topic code EMB when filed so they can be easily identified by downstream systems. Correspondents should file embargoed stories as soon as they are available.

In System 77/Coyote and Lynx Editor, publication embargo information is added manually to the story and header: (EMBARGOED) is written after the slug and an advisory line is inserted at the top of the story field (Coyote) or the advisory line field (Lynx Editor) with the release date and time. A reporter will usually add the embargo details before sending the story to the desk.

What to do when an embargo is broken

If another news service breaks an embargo, contact the source to see if they object to our running the story early. In urgent cases (e.g. when a market is moving) we can override objections and issue the story ahead of time after approval by an editor-in-charge. In non-urgent cases we would normally respect the wishes of the source of the material.

If we decide also to ignore an embargo we must issue an advisory on the following lines to explain the circumstances: BC-BALDONIA-SOLDIERS (ADVISORY) The BALDONIA CITY story headlined "Baldonian president honours five dead soldiers", which was embargoed for 2301 GMT April 28, is released for immediate publication. Another news organisation has broken the embargo.

Accidental release to Reuters screens

If embargoed material (including Alerts) is released accidentally to screen services, this material must not be deleted. Where appropriate, we should quickly issue an advisory with the same USN. For example, for the release of a trade figure â’¦

ADVISORY - RELEASE OF RURITANIAN TRADE DATA Reuters inadvertently issued an alert and story detailing Ruritanian trade data for June. Other scheduled data, including money supply and foreign reserves remain under embargo until 0900 GMT.

Again, do not delete the errant material. This may give unfair advantage to those who spotted it and disadvantage those who happened to be looking away from their screen at the time. Do not apologise in the advisory - keep it as simple as possible.

Mending fences on embargo breaks

In all cases of embargo breaks the bureau or unit must inform: the relevant desk, the organisation supplying the news, and if merited, regulatory authorities such as stock exchanges.

Tell them we have made an honest mistake for which we are sorry; that we are taking steps to make sure such things do not occur again and that we trust future relations with the source will not be jeopardised.

Bureau chiefs should then write a letter to the organisation affected repeating that our policy is to observe embargoes and that we apologise for our error. In most cases, an embargo break requires an incident report to be written.

Appendix

Use the following guide to determine whether to correct, refile or repeat a story.

When to Correct

RICs -- When the RIC used is not that of the company in the news. If a RIC belongs to no other company and links to a blank data page, the story should be refiled to remove the dead RIC and replace it with an active RIC. DATA - Nearly every error that involves a number requires a correction.

MILLION VS BILLION -- Corrections are necessary with this common error. Also, correct when the word "billion" or "million" has been dropped.

DATES AND TIME PERIODS -- Wrong dates, months or years in the text. Excludes dates in datelines and days of the week in the first paragraph, which often can be addressed with a refile unless the meaning changes. For example, we would correct: XYZ Co acquired EFG Co. in 1997, not 1897, as stated in paragraph 5.

QUOTES -- Any error in a quote that changes the meaning of the sentence. It is unacceptable to drop the quote from an update instead of issuing a correction. If a quote contains an extra word or two or is missing a word, issue a refile unless the meaning changes.

PRICES -- It is unacceptable to issue an update rather than a correction when the wrong price for a stock, bond or other asset is published (unless the price changed incrementally while the story was being filed.) Also correct mistakes in the direction of any price changes, such as when the story mistakenly says a stock rose instead of fell.

BACKGROUND -- Even though background information may not change the meaning of the story or its trading impact, it often adds to the crredibility, and thus merits a correction when it is wrong.

PROPER NAMES -- Names of people, places, companies and organisations should be corrected when a misspelling creates confusion or when an erroneous name has been substituted. For example: The name President Jeb Bush was inadvertently used in the first sentence instead of his brother George W. Use a refile to correct obvious typos in proper names. For example, President Georeg Bush. The trashline would read: Refiles to correct spelling of George in first paragraph.

GENERAL CONTENT -- Descriptions, analyses or explanations that are erroneous should be corrected even if republished from a previous story or if they are not of primary importance. For example, an advisory line might read: The second paragraph erroneously described XYZ Co as the largest widget maker in the world. XYZ Co is the second largest behind QRS Corp.

DROPPED WORD -- When the missing word changes the meaning of a sentence, a correction is necessary. For example, "He was found guilty," instead of "He was found not guilty." Otherwise, use refile to add dropped words or delete extraneous ones.

TIME REFERENCES -- Corrections of time references should carry advisory lines that read: Corrects month measured by housing data to June instead of July.

Special note on Alerts: Mistakes in Alerts raise the special issue of timings. The kind of errors that would merit refiles are usually better left unaddressed in Alerts. When a refile is deemed necessary, let the Alert with the mistake stand and issue a refile that would stand side by side with the original. Any mistake involving a number would still be corrected in Alerts. Again, it is best practice to insist that all mistakes in Alerts be sent to the appropriate editing desk, which would then make a decision on how to handle it. The bureau, reporter or editor in the field should never make such a decision independently. Any remedial action must be handled by the editing desk.

When to Refile

Use refile to handle the following types of mistakes that would have no bearing on a trading decision or would not distort the meaning of a story or any passage within it. Sample advisory lines are also provided.

RICS - Refile stories that contain wrong RICS only when the symbol used belongs to no other company and links to a blank data page. The trashline would read: Refiles to correct inactive stock symbol in paragraph 4. If a RIC belonging to another company is mistakenly used, a correction is required. The trashline would read: Corrects stock symbol in paragraph 3 to ABC.N from ABC.O.

DATELINE -- Errors in datelines, including the location and date, unless either would have an important bearing on the meaning of the story e.g. Corrects dateline from FRANKFURT to Brussels or Corrects dateline to Aug 5 from Aug 4

DAY OF THE WEEK -- When the wrong day of the week appears in the lead sentence, unless the mistake would distort the significance of the news or applies to a day in the future e.g. Corrects day in first paragraph to Tuesday from Monday.

TIME CONVERSIONS -- Simple time conversions when the time being converted is correct, e.g. Corrects time in paragraph 3 to 1350 GMT from 1550 GMT.

SPELLING -- For typographical errors of common words, or most spelling mistakes in proper names, e.g. Fixes typo in 10th paragraph or Corrects spelling of Greenspan in final paragraph.

NAMES -- A story that says "President Bush" on first reference or President Goerge Bush, for example, should be refiled with President George W. Bush. The trashline would be: Refiles to correct name in paragraph 2 to President George W. Bush.

AGES -- Use REFILE for correcting the age of an individual, unless the mistake distorts the meaning of the story. The trashline would read: Refiles to correct age in paragraph 6 to 53 years old.

TITLES -- Use REFILE to correct minor mistakes in titles, such as senior vice president instead of vice president. The trashline would read: Refiles to correct title in paragraph 2 to chief financial officer. But use CORRECTED for errors that could have bigger ramifications, such as chief financial officer instead of chief executive. If there is any question, the desk head will make the decision on REFILE vs CORRECTED.

ADDS WORD -- To insert dropped words, unless the dropped word distorts the meaning of the sentence (such as the word "not") e.g. Corrects to add dropped word executive in paragraph 10. Other examples that would require corrections are words like million or percent when dropping them raises the possibility that a reader may misinterpret a number.

DELETES WORD -- To remove unnecessary words unless the presence of the word distorted the meaning of the sentence. E.g. Corrects to delete extraneous word the in paragraph two.

When to repeat

Use repeats in the following situations. Examples of advisory lines are provided.

ADDING CODES AND RICS: The advisory line should read: Repeats to widen distribution

ADDING BYLINES OR TAGLINES: The advisory line should read Repeats to adds byline

CHANGING SLUGS: The trashline should read: Repeats to change story label used by some customers. If we change a slug on a story that has been sent to media, an advisory must be sent to the media codes noting the slug has been changed to/from.

REPEATING TO NEW USN: The trash line should read: Repeats to new story number. Remove media codes from the repeat.

REMOVING STORY ATTACHED TO PREVIOUS UPDATE: The trash line should read: Repeats to remove story attached to bottom of text.

REPEATING TO ATTACH TO ALERTS: The trash line should read: Repeats to attach text to news alerts. Remove any media codes from the repeat.

REPEATING AHEAD OF DATA OR EVENT: The trashline should read: Repeats story published on Monday ahead of data due at (time)

REPEATING FROM A PREVIOUS DAY: The trashline should read: Repeats story first published on Sunday.

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 15:18, 8 February 2011.

Cracking the codes

Contents

- 1 General
- 2 Coding guidelines
- 3 Reuters Instrument Codes (RICs)
- 4 Guidance for checking RICs
- 5 Service messages

General

Many clients rely on our coding system to search for and access our news, so it is important that we deliver exactly the news they are looking for. A missed code can be a missed story as far as the client is concerned. Overcoding, on the other hand, dulls the efficiency of searches - not only for clients, but for colleagues who rely on our systems in their daily work. Sloppy coding can mean that our news doesn't get read when it should, and it means clients think we're behind on stories when often we're ahead.

Deskers can help to ensure that the work of reporters is not "wasted" through improper coding. Reporters, especially specialist reporters, can help by applying topic codes to stories sent to the desk.

There are eight main code types:

- Product codes parallel the news products sold to terminal clients
- Topic codes break down each product by topic, making searches easier
- Reuters Instrument Codes(RICs) allow clients to click through from a story to data about any financial instruments
- Country codes identify the countries involved
- Named item codes help clients locate routine reports - e.g. market reports, Top News summaries, diaries, press digests and guest columns, and are usually imbedded in a proforma or system template
- Category codes allow media subscribers to sort stories into baskets - e.g. routing sports copy to the sports department basket
- Auto-generated codes include codes used mainly to sort (i.e. include and exclude) stories available for distribution on Internet services
- Service message codes allow desks and bureaux to exchange internal messages about the file. *(N.B. Lynx has no service message function and operational messages are exchanged using email, the Message Panel in the **Lynx Editor** or Reuters Messaging).*

Coding guidelines

Topic codes are applied to stories ABOUT a topic, not a topic of interest to a particular sector or country (that is what product codes are for). If the topic code doesn't explain what the story is about, don't use it. An economic indicator may be of interest to the foreign exchange market, but it is NOT a forex story so it would not take the FRX topic code. Stories about Afghanistan might be of interest

to readers in Pakistan, but would not carry the PK country code. Similarly, the codes OPEC, IMF, G7 and EU should be used only on stories ABOUT these organisations themselves - not on stories about member countries.

It is possible to add topic codes after the story is filed - but NOT product codes. You CAN add product codes to a newsbreak covering an alert. To add a topic code to a story that has already been filed, simply send a "dummy" page with the same USN and using at least one of the product codes on the original story code. For the dummy take, you need a full headline and something in the text field - for this, a period/full stop or even an indentation with the spacebar will do. Reporters should try to apply topic codes to stories they file to the desks. Stories landing on the desks should at least carry the country topic code, the regional topic code, (EMRG if an emerging market) and the main subject code - for instance, POL for politics.

Please see Julius for a full list of codes.

Reuters Instrument Codes (RICs)

Reuters Instrument Codes (RICs), or ticker symbols, are crucial in helping customers find news and market data. All financial instruments -- stocks, bonds, currencies and commodities -- as well as many types of economic data have RICs.

It is essential to include the RIC in the System 77/Decade header field and in the story itself. The main reason is to make sure clients see news on the underlying instruments and help them link to related news, data, prices and charts. Adding RICs also makes it much easier to analyse readership and timings data.

Economic data that are listed on the ECON pages have RICs. These are increasingly used by clients to trigger real-time trades and to create historical graphs. You can find the RIC by double clicking on the name of the indicator in ECON. Please add this RIC into the System 77/Decade header field for the specific story on the latest economic indicator release. Do not use it in every single story that mentions that piece of data, however, or you will swamp clients with tangential news. The RIC also must be entered into the FATFRIEND table when you are injecting live data updates to screens

Company RICs need to be inserted into alerts. The RIC follows the first mention of a company in the body of the story. A traditional company RIC looks like this: IBM is the ticker symbol for the company and .N is the exchange identifier (the NYSE in this case) New market regulations such as Mifid in Europe and NMS in the United States have created alternative trading venues and new sets of RICs. For the time being, Reuters news will insert the traditional company RICs with exchange identifiers. Many unlisted companies and entities also have RICs. These are identified with square brackets and a UL (unlisted) identifier instead of an exchange identifier (e.g. [TPG.UL] for U.S. buyout firm TPG).

It is vital that reporters and sub-editors use the **company RIC look-up** GDK on System 77 and Decade to find the correct RIC. Don't guess if you aren't sure. Company RICs change at the rate of about 200 a month. If you pick up an unfamiliar RIC from an old story on Kobra it may be wrong. Deskers must check RICs as they would any other checkable fact in the story.

A wrong RIC is an error of fact in a story and must be corrected, just like any other substantive

error. We use refiles to clean up "dead RICs," or RICs that are no longer in use and do not lead to any live quote or financial instrument.

If an alert or a story doesn't carry the right RIC, clients simply don't see the news. A wrong or missing RIC also means the news "flag" on live quote displays for any of the financial instruments are not activated. A wrong company RIC especially if it is linked to a "bad news" story, can have serious impact on the wrongly identified company.

Full lists of both listed and unlisted RICs, updated regularly, are available in the System 77 and Decade databases. Make sure you are aware of all GDKs in the system designed to help with search for and applying RICs.

Strip all RICs from copy going to media subscribers and Business News Schedules.

Guidance for checking RICs

Once you have a RIC list on your editing screen, scroll down the list to compare the FULL name against the choices. Also check topic and country codes provided in the RIC list.

Next, type the RIC into the RIC box on the right-hand corner on this page: http://cemplookup/search/company.aspx. Make sure you have the right one.

You can also type the RIC into a NEWS window on 3000 Xtra and hit return, which will enable you to see previous Reuters news about the company or instrument. You can also cross check the RIC in a 3000 Xtra QUOTE window to check to see if the instrument is trading.

Ensure the RIC you plan to use is the same as the one used on previous stories about the company. If a RIC search doesn't pull up any stories, you have a problem. If you cannot find the RIC on Kobra, try calling up stories by using the name of the company or instrument, using hyphens to connect the names and surrounding any word with three letters or fewer with quotation marks (e.g. "IBM").

If in doubt, ask senior reporters, who may be aware of problem RICs.

Tips for avoiding RIC errors:

- Make sure you do not have a false RIC of a company with a similar name, or that you have put the RIC of a publicly traded company on news about a private company with a similar or identical name.
- Short name searches are dangerous - too many companies have similar names. In searches, use the full company name with correct capitalisation.
- Some of the most difficult-to-locate RICs are in the software industry, where internal capital letters are common in company names, such as RealNetworks. Other extremely problematic company names are those with unusual punctuation, such as B.A.T Industries Plc (no period after the T). Also watch companies that have an ampersand (&) or "And" in their names.
- Familiarise yourself with well-known acronyms (e.g. IBM).
- Some major companies have multiple RICs as they trade in many places. As a rule, use the mother RIC on first reference. If it's a dual-listed company, such as a company with ADRs or

GDRs, insert the ADR/GDR RICs in the copy.
- When you find an incorrect or problematic RIC, tell your desk head.

Service messages

(N.B. Lynx has no service message function and operational messages are exchanged using email, the Message Panel in the Lynx Editor or Reuters Messaging)."

A service message is an in-house message sent through the editorial editing system. It is primarily used for news editing between desks and bureaux, among desks, and for exchanging information between/among bureaux. Service messages are not private. The service "wire" provides a record of operational exchanges. Services should be short, simple, to the point and polite. Humour does not travel in service messages and beware of inappropriate language, since service messages have been known to 'escape' onto client circuits as a result of miscoding. You must know the service message codes (see Julius for a full list)

Any detailed news editing done on Reuters Messaging, by screen-top or on the telephone should be followed up with a service message or email detailing what has been discussed and agreed. This way, all concerned are in the loop and there is less room for misunderstanding.

Do not send stories or information that clearly warrants a story in service message form unless asked to do so. Sensitive stories (e.g. those with potential legal dangers) should be sent to the desk using the **ATTN EDITOR** flag and regular filing codes. Such a story should be preceded by a service message, coded to the service wire and to the story filing code, outlining the concerns.

To allow for clarity the message is labelled with the short form of the bureau (usually the same as the service code) followed by a timestamp and, usually, a one-word description of the subject. The following sample message was sent by Asia Desk to Wellington on the 5th day of the month at 3.00 p.m.

WEL 051500 QUAKE

prowel/joyce exasiadesk/norton. fyi hk observatory reporting quake measuring 5.8 on the richter scale 600 miles east of cook islands. gtfl checks. rgds/jerry norton +65-870-3814 New reporters and deskers sometimes notice the word "protectively" "fyi" or "apols if missed" in service messages - basically this means "you might already know this but I'm telling you anyway just be on the safe side."

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 15:53, 27 January 2011.

News Presentation

Contents

- 1 Advisory line
- 2 Bullet points
  - 2.1 Brief
  - 2.2 Wrapup
  - 2.3 Interview
  - 2.4 Preview
  - 2.5 Market reports
  - 2.6 Factboxes
- 3 Bylines
- 4 Cross-heads (Sub-heads)
- 5 Datelines
- 6 Headlines
  - 6.1 Headline tags
- 7 Pool reports
- 8 Schedules
  - 8.1 Schedule issue times
  - 8.2 Skedlines
- 9 Sign-offs
- 10 Slugs and Slugging
  - 10.1 How to slug
- 11 Unique Story Numbers (USNs)
  - 11.1 The USN drill

Advisory line

(also known as an EDS NOTE or "Trash Line")

Advisory lines at the top of Updates, advise clients of additional new details in a running story and where to find the information in text. They are also an important news-editing tool because they help us decide whether we really need to re-edit the story. If possible, keep the note to one line (no more than two), enclosed in brackets. Indent one space and start with a capital letter. Be specific e.g. (Adds prime minister's reaction in paragraph 3, updates death toll in paragraph 4). Do not start the advisory with "eds" or "eds note". If you recast your story completely because of a significant development, say e.g. ("Rewrites throughout after military intervention threat"). Avoid journalese - e.g. "graf", "graph", "para".

Bullet points

The aim of bullet points is to break complicated information down into digestible form or to highlight the main elements of a story. Bullet points also free us up to be more creative in our lead writing.

Bullet points work in many story formats: BRIEFs, WRAPUPs, INTERVIEWs, market reports and factboxes.

Here are general guidelines:

- Bullet points must be succinct, in the active voice and in the present tense
- Every bullet point is preceded by an asterisk (*)
- The minimum number of bullet points is two, the maximum five
- They cannot exceed one line (about 10 words) in length
- Bullet points can be analytical or interpretative
- Both reporters and desk editors can write bullet points
- Bullet points are placed above trashlines, bylines and datelines

Here are some details on the various story formats that currently use bullet points. We may extend this group to include other story types.

Brief

The BRIEF is an automatically generated item (by our Wire Engine alerting system) with a special headline tag. BRIEFs are meant to save time and ensure customers who cannot receive alerts get the guts of our stories. The bullets repeat the alerts verbatim, and that's OK. A BRIEF can have more than 5 bullets. BRIEFs are used by company news but can be used by other files.

Wrapup

Bullet points on WRAPUPs are used to highlight the key points in a big story. They should not slavishly repeat the lead or the headline or focus only on what is in the first dozen lines. Across the file, bullets should be used on WRAPUPs. Political and general news WRAPUPs will no longer have trashlines. In all other cases, we're keeping trashlines for now.

Interview

On INTERVIEWs, bullet points must be used from the UPDATE 1 onward to give readers a bird's eye view of the story.

Preview

On PREVIEWs, bullet points serve to identify the event being previewed, when it will take place and a key highlight. wo special rules apply: The first bullet point of a PREVIEW starts with * What: and describes the event. The second bullet point has * When: and gives the date, local time and GMT equivalent in brackets.

Market reports

In market reports, bullet points can either take the place of a narrative (similar to BRIEFs) or top a narrative (here, the same rules apply as under WRAPUP or INTERVIEW). Check with your EIC which format works best for your market. In reports that consist only of bullet points, use more links [ID: nXX] to guide readers to full stories. For narrative market reports, avoid bullets with market prices but instead focus on short descriptions of factors moving the market.

Factboxes

Flexibility is key here. Some boxes contain just five bullet points. Some boxes are Q+A format and require long entries to explain a complicated issue. Consult with edref on its preferred style or look at previous examples of FACTBOXES to see what works best.

Bylines

A correspondent's byline underlines "ownership" and responsibility for a substantial part of the reporting. We do not byline routine reporting of a statement or news release or a newspaper or other pickup. We can use a byline on a story only against a dateline where the reporter was present.

Apart from newsbreaks, any news story may carry a byline if it contains original reporting. Length is not relevant. Double bylines may be used on stories originating from a single centre when the story is the product of significant reporting by two individuals, but should be used sparingly. Normally, a second reporter's contribution would be recognised in the "additional reporting" signoff. Never use more than two bylines on a single story, and keep it to a maximum two or three names in the "additional reporting" signoff. Stories with a double dateline that are bylined should carry a byline from each location.

Cross-heads (Sub-heads)

Cross-headings are used in all stories of 500 or more words to break the mass of copy into more digestible morsels. Cross-heads are sub-headlines of two to four words, all in upper case. Aim for something simple, informative and unbiased. Insert a line feed (that is a blank line) before the cross-head. One or two cross-heads are enough in a 500-600 word piece. Three or four will do in an 800-word story. Make sure the cross-heads don't break the flow of the story, for instance by breaking up a speaker's quotes.

Datelines

Datelines are essential to demonstrate Reuters proximity to the action, to show that we have feet on the ground and are reporting with authority.

In a global organization, however, with large teams of specialist reporters in major centers, Reuters often covers stories from locations that have nothing to do with the scene of the action. Examples include: stories based on corporate announcements, including earnings reports; actions by credit rating agencies; bond issues by governments and companies around the world reported from major financial centers; and reports released electronically by international organizations. In these cases the reporter's location in the dateline adds nothing and at times can be confusing. So do not use place names in datelines on stories that are either largely written off electronically released statements or otherwise done by journalists remote from the scene of the action. Such stories may still carry reporter bylines, however, and if so should indicate in the contact information at the bottom of the story where the bylined journalist is located.

Just to be clear: Reuters continuing preference and policy is to use place names in datelines on all stories where the bylined reporter is near the scene of the story, but if there is a doubt about whether a place name in a dateline could confuse or mislead the reader then omit the place name.

USE PLACE NAMES IN DATELINES IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES:

Stories with place names in the dateline could include:

- Main stories, updates or wrapups where Reuters has reporters, stringers, photographers or camera operators near the action - use the place name of the main journalist closest to the action;
- Main stories in which significant reporting from multiple sources has moved the story beyond a press statement rewrite may also justify a place name in the dateline so long as it is not confusing or misleading. Editing desks and EICs will be the final arbiters of when to use a place name in a dateline;
- Major market reports where the reporter is based in the financial center where the market is largely based;
- Initiative interviews in person (including Reuters Summit stories) or by phone, mentioning the location of the interviewee in the story:
- Analyses, (including stories using the tags or formats PREVIEW, INSIGHT, NEWSMAKER, DEAL TALK, BUY OR SELL etc), and features, special reports and columns (including BREAKINGVIEWS) where the byline and dateline add credibility to the story and there is no risk of confusing the reader. See also Handbook guideline on bylines.

Double datelines may be used on stories with a broadly similar amount of substantive information from two locations where we have a reporting presence.

A Reuters dateline is indented four spaces at the start of the text field. Write the city in upper case. The date and the name (Reuters) are in upper and lower case. A dash between spaces separates the dateline from the opening paragraph of the text. The names of major world cities can stand alone, but if there is any doubt about whether an international readership would be familiar with the city then use the name of the country as well in lower case. Do not use a period or full stop when abbreviating months.

For example:

```
NEW YORK, Sept 12 (Reuters) -

BISHKEK, Kyrgyzstan, Sept 12 (Reuters) -
```

Again, if there is any doubt as to whether a place name in a dateline would confuse or mislead the reader, omit the place name from the dateline.

DO NOT USE PLACE NAMES IN DATELINES IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES:

Do not use place names in datelines on stories largely written from press statements obtained via fax, press statement wires, electronic feeds, or websites, or stories largely based on information gathered from other electronic sources like conference calls, webcasts, or databases.

Such stories may still carry bylines, and should indicate in the tag line at the bottom of the story where the bylined reporter is located. Also note in the tag line the name and location of any other reporter who has contributed to the story.

Items that do not carry a place name in the dateline should still identify in the text the country or city where the company or individual is based, or the location of the speaker or action, or the means by which we obtained the information - "in a written statement", "on a webcast", "said on television" etc.

The following stories fall into this category and do not usually take a place name in the dateline:

- Stories largely based on corporate announcements from press releases received via fax, email, wire, feed, or website, including earnings releases, M&A announcements, and credit rating agency actions;
- Stories largely based on industry events (often closed to the media) that we cover remotely via analysts conference calls and webcasts;
- Stories largely based on online court documents such as the US's court system's PACER database or the US SEC's EDGAR database or other databases;
- Stories largely based on analysts' research emails;
- Stories largely based on newspaper or online journal pickups;
- Stories largely based on television appearances by newsmakers.

Items that are tabular, entirely numerical, compilations of established background facts, and bullet point items, do not take place names in datelines. These usually take the headline tags Factbox, Timeline, Q&A, Earnings Table, Text, Diary, Advisory, New Issue, Sports Results, Sports Fixtures, Sports Standings, Sports Summaries, Take a Look, Top News, Highlights, STXNEWS, FXNEWS, MMNEWS, etc. To meet the needs of the top news packager software that feeds the Eikon and Kobra desktop products and NewsPro for mobile devices, and other product formats, items that do not carry a place name in the dateline must carry a date and Reuters identification. Indent the date four spaces at the start of the text field. The date and the name (Reuters) are in upper and lower case. A dash between spaces separates the dateline from the opening paragraph of the text, as follows:

```
    Sept 12 (Reuters) -
```

Editorial's Lynx Editor software auto-loads the dateline based on pre-specified location and time zone. These preferences can be adjusted to remove the location, or it can be manually deleted. Reporters who mostly work on stories that do not require a location in the dateline can remove it from their preferences and story formats will autoload without one.

To ensure transparency, and to meet the needs of Thomson Reuters product formats, items without place names in datelines, with or without bylines, must carry a signoff tagline in single parentheses that provides the name and location of the writer(s) and the name of the main or last copy editor on

the story. For example:

```
(Reporting by Joe Bloggs in Anytown, Anycountry; additional reporting by Jane Doe, Sometown, S
```

The usual sign offs in double brackets should follow that tag line:

```
((joe.bloggs@reuters.com; +1 234 567 8910; Reuters Messaging: joe.bloggs.reuters.com@reuters.n
```

For more on sign offs Click here.

Headlines

Headlines are both a presentational and writing issue. Far too many are dull, unclear and uninformative, prompting the reader to switch off, rather than tune in. Headlines are a maximum 50 characters after the tag, written in upper and lower case. They must be sharp, clear and informative. In the case of a screen reader, they must have the basic information needed to make a decision. Use short words instead of long; use the active voice, not passive; use present tense and avoid unfamiliar abbreviations. If it is a corporate story, insert key RICs. It is better to convey one idea crisply and clearly rather than cram in two ideas awkwardly.

Headline tags

Tags are used at the start of a headline to give screen clients a clearer idea of the type of story behind the headline. Some tags are allowed to be all upper case; others need to be presented in upper/lower case (Click here for the full list on Julius of tags and their definition).

Tags should be followed by a dash (no space) and the headline immediately after the dash (again no space). e.g.: ANALYSIS-White House change on Iran may reap benefits Approved tags do not count towards the 50 character limit on headlines.

Pool reports

A pool is a limited group of journalists from different news services who report on behalf of the entire press corps when space is limited or there are other constraints, such as safety, on general access to an area or event. A single reporter may also constitute a pool.

The ground rules for pools, and in many cases the procedures for selecting pool members, should be clearly defined and understood.

Basically there are three kinds of pools:

- A single story is written on behalf of all pool members.
- Individual pool members write their own stories which are filed on a collective pool basis.

- The pool writer provides a detailed, chronological account of what happened in note form and journalists write their own stories from that.

If we know that the Reuters member of the pool has written the story we should use his or her byline, including an advisory line like this: (This story was written by Reuters correspondent Jane Smith on behalf of the pool of White House correspondents in Saudi Arabia.)

If the Reuters correspondent did not write the story we should not use a byline and should file an advisory line like this: (The pool of White House correspondents in Saudi Arabia of which Jane Smith of Reuters is a member wrote this story.) Add the word (POOL) to the slug of a pooled story, e.g. BC-TRANSMENIA-HOSTAGES (POOL).

Schedules

The Schedule (or Sked in newsroom jargon) is primarily a planning tool for media clients, providing a present tense approximation of the first paragraph of major stories that are planned, about to move or which have already moved and are worth highlighting. It does not list all stories on the file. The Schedule also serves as a news planning tool for editors. News must never be "saved for the Sked". We are a round-the-clock operation and publish news as it happens. Desk editors compile the Schedule from "skedlines" submitted by reporters and bureaux.

World News Schedules are issued six times a day on the Reuters World Service (RWS) main media wire and World Business News schedules three times a day on the business wire. Reuters Americas also issues two schedules for the Reuters North America (RNA) wire and three business schedules per day for business wire clients in the Americas. Wires go only to media clients so RICs should not be used on business schedules.

Schedule issue times

The World News Schedule is issued at 0200 GMT and 0600 GMT all year round and at the following GMT times during the London summer/winter; 1000/1100; 1400/1500; 1800/1900; 2200/2300.

Business News Schedules are sent at 0500 GMT (Asia) and by London at 0830/0930 GMT and 1230/1330 GMT.

In the Americas, skedlines must be filed early enough to meet the following deadlines: (All times New York time, i.e. EST in the winter or EDT in the summer) 0700 RAM general news media schedule 1030 RAM Reuters Business Report (RBR) media schedule 1030 RAM general news media schedule 1430 RAM Reuters Business Report (RBR) media schedule (Update 1) 1430 RAM general news media schedule 1700 RAM general news media schedule

Skedlines

Offerings for the Schedules are commonly known as "skedlines" and allow Reuters editors to see what stories are developing and select the most important for the "Sked"... Example: UNITED NATIONS - Zimbabwe should immediately halt its bulldozing of urban slums, a campaign that has been carried out in "an indiscriminate and unjustified manner, with indifference to human suffering," U.N. report says (ZIMBABWE-UN/ (UPDATE 2), moving at 0900, pix, tv, by Evelyn Leopold, 575 words). There should be no "cycle identifier" (i.e. "BC" meaning "both cycles") preceding the slug. In this example from the World News Schedule, 0900 is understood to mean 0900 GMT. If this were a U.S. Schedule, the time would be styled 9 a.m. and would be understood to be EST or EDT. The skedline must state whether there is a picture or television images to accompany the story, at what time the story moved or is expected to move, and how many words the story has or is expected to run to.

Desks will go back to the bureau if they think the story will be too long, or too late or should have accompany images.

In the Americas, reporters send a skedline either to the World Desk, Americas or to the relevant desk in New York, using the appropriate desk code. (A one word slug SKEDLINE on the Cy-Slug line of the DECADE header is sufficient. No headline needed on the GN-Head line of the DECADE header). For other regions, skedlines should be coded NEXT plus the relevant desk code (LON for London or ASDK for Asia), depending on which centre is compiling the next World Schedule. Skedlines should be sent at least half an hour before the Schedule is issued. Add a reasonable amount of time for desk editing when estimating the time you expect the story to be published. If you are unable to meet the landing time noted in the Schedule, you must advise the desk. If the delay is significant, an Advisory may have to be issued. On a big breaking story, the skedline should be sent after the Newsbreak. On a late breaking story, desks can take a skedline until the last minute as long as there is notice that one is coming. If an important news event is due, send a holding skedline stating briefly what is coming, the slug, when expected, author and wordage. If you miss a Schedule, send a skedline anyway so the desks can highlight the story as MOVED in the next one.

Sign-offs

Sign-offs give the contact details for the people most involved in researching and editing a story. They demonstrate accountability and also give clients a contact point if they have problems with a story. A sign-off comprises a first line of content in single parentheses that lists the main people involved in creating and editing the story, followed by a second section in double parentheses that gives contact information for the reporter, or the primary reporter where more than one contributed.

So it would look like this:

(Reporting by Sam Thomas; Editing by June Singh)

((sam.thomas@reuters.com; +1 646 897 1898; Reuters Messaging: sam.thomas.reuters.com@reuters.net))

The information in single brackets will go out to all clients; the section in double parentheses will only go to financial clients, as everything after the first set of double parentheses in any story is always stripped before the story goes out to media clients. Note the format: single indent for both lines of content; Reporting and Editing are capitalised, by is not capitalised; first line has single parentheses and does not contain any contact information, only roles and names; second line is in double parentheses and contains the contact information such as telephone numbers; no mention of e-mail or Tel; Reuters Messaging: is written just like that; telephone number includes + and country dial code; sections are separated by a semi-colon. Do not add items for other people, such as Editing by xxxx - this does not make it easier for the desk and all too often the result is that the xxxx goes out to clients.

Guidelines for particular story types:

1. **BYLINED STORY** - A byline gives the name of the reporter or reporters who have made the most substantial contribution to a story and have a responsibility for the bulk of the content.A story that carries a byline does not carry a "Reporting by" entry. Reason: duplication of information. Sign-off then would be: (Editing by June Singh)((sam.thomas@reuters.com; +1 646 897 1898; Reuters Messaging: sam.thomas.reuters.com@reuters.net)) For double bylined stories add both sets of contact details in double parentheses, on merit.
2. **BYLINED STORY WITH ADDITIONAL REPORTER(S)** - Other reporters who contributed to a bylined story are credited, with their locations if they are different from those of the dateline: (Additional reporting by Mohan Kumar in Bangkok; Editing by June Singh)((sam.thomas@reuters.com; +1 646 897 1898; Reuters Messaging:sam.thomas.reuters.com@reuters.net)) **NOTE:** "Additional reporting by" credits are generally not warranted if all you did was get a 'no comment' from a company spokesman. Let's be generous and chalk this up to teamwork.
3. **NO BYLINE** - Story carries single "Reporting by" credit that lists one or more reporters that worked on the story (in that single field). Reason: puts same information across in less space.(Reporting by Sam Thomas and Mohan Kumar; Editing by June Singh)((sam.thomas@reuters.com; +1 646 897 1898; Reuters Messaging:sam.thomas.reuters.com@reuters.net))
4. **EDITING BY** - Should usually show the name of the last person who edited the story or the person who did the most substantial edit. If the story was edited in the bureau before being sent to the desk, the "Editing by" field should show the name of the bureau editor and the person who finally pushed the button on the story. This field should never show more than two names.
5. **WRITING BY** - used on stories where the bylined reporter on the spot can report but not write, for whatever operational reason. Note that the contact details in this case should also be for the writer. Reason: the reporter in this case is very probably not easy to reach. This field may also be used where a journalist has written a story that draws substantially on a series of stories from another Reuters service, possibly even adding some local reporting, rather than producing a straight translation of a story. (Writing by Olaf Brandt; Editing by June Sink)((olaf.brandt@reuters.com; +1 646 897 1335; Reuters Messaging: olaf.brandt.reuters.com@reuters.net))
6. **TRANSLATED BY** - used on stories that are translated into another language, alongside the credits for the original reporter(s) either in the byline or the sign-off, as outlined above. Contact details should be those of the translator unless the reporter can also easily field questions in the new language of the story. (Reporting by Sam Thomas; Translated by Jeanne Bouchard)((jeanne.bouchard@reuters.com; +33 1 1234 5678; Reuters Messaging: jeanne.bouchard.reuters.com@reuters.net))

7. **SENSITIVE OR DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES** - our reporters sometimes cannot be named because they are working in difficult or dangerous circumstances, where identification culd endanger them. If this is the case, leave the name of the reporter off the story and use the contact details for the desk or bureau Editor.
8. **STRINGERS** - if the reporter is a stringer who does not have Reuters contact details, then use their name as reporter but use contact details for the bureau or editor which handled the story. If you cannot use the stringer's name, use the name of the editor and his/her contact details.

Slugs and Slugging

A slug is a word or combination of words and numbers appearing in the header field of Lynx Editor software to identify each story and, where necessary, establish links with related stories. All stories require slugs (see more details on Julius)

A slug is a tool that media and online clients use in word searches to retrieve stories that interest them. It is also a key tool within Reuters own systems to allow related content, including video and still images, to be packaged together. The "slugline" is all in capital letters, e.g.: RUSSIA-ECONOMY/IMF (UPDATE 1) All content that carries the same packaging slug (the section of the slug before the forward slash) will be automatically pulled together into a single news story package, in this case on the Russian economy (RUSSIA-ECONOMY/).

No two stories published in the same 24-hour cycle should carry an identical slug. But it is important that linked stories should carry the same "packaging slug". The end of the packaging slug is identified by a forward slash /. This format will allow related material to be identified by the automated news event packager and presented to clients as a package. e.g. BRITAIN-ELECTION/POLLS, BRITAIN-ELECTION/POLICIES, BRITAIN-ELECTION/BLAIR (NEWSMAKER), BRITAIN-ELECTION/ (UPDATE 1) etc.

There is no space before or after a hyphen in a slug. Additional information such as URGENT, UPDATE, FACTBOX etc, should appear in brackets one space after the end of the slug. This is also the space where you should indicate if there are pictures or video to illustrate a story. Where more than one of these is present, separate them by commas eg. (UPDATE 2, PIX, TV).

The 24-hour news day means that the counting of UPDATES, for example, usually reverts to 1 at midnight local time, but use common sense. If there is a plane crash at 11:15 at night and you've got an Update 1 out at 11:45 it might look a bit silly to revert to a new series at 12.10. Look for a natural break when you can start the series again.

How to slug

The slug on a story should indicate clearly what the story is about. Usually a slug consists of country, region, company, institution or other subject category identifiers. We should choose one word - or two words separated by a hyphen - to make up the "root" or packaging slug of the story. This should end in a forward slash /. The packaging slug stands alone on the main story (the UPDATE or WRAPUP) and on the most important visuals in the package. Separate but related

stories should carry the same packaging slug plus another word sometimes known as a "wild slug" after the / to best describe the content. For example, the main story from a Nato summit might be slugged NATO-SUMMIT/. A breaking story on a speech by President Bush at the conference would be slugged NATO-SUMMIT/BUSH, a factbox would be slugged NATO-SUMMIT/ISSUES (FACTBOX), a demonstration outside the venue would be slugged NATO-SUMMIT/PROTEST. The later trunk would be slugged NATO-SUMMIT/ (UPDATE 3). Broad category or thematic words should be avoided in sluglines unless they are appropriate, as can be the case on clearly defined or single-issue stories. Make sure you change the UPDATE number in the slugline when you re-lead the story, and make sure the Update number in the slug and headline match.

Unique Story Numbers (USNs)

The Unique Story Number (USN) links together pages of a story on terminals. As long as the same USN is used on each page of a story, our systems can join together the pages into a single item. The USN also allows us to correct, overwrite and replace stories on the screen. It is a basic desk and reporter function to check that correct USNs are used. Please note that USNs must be enclosed by square brackets and preceded by an "n" when they are used as a navigational tool in TOP NEWS SUMMARIES, TAKE A LOOKs etc. e.g.: "This story is accompanied by a Table. To retrieve, click on [nSYD12345].

The USN drill

A snap and newsbreak carry the same USN. The UPDATE 1 to that newsbreak takes a new USN and all subsequent updates retain that USN through the rest of the 24-hour news cycle. When a story begins without a snap or a newsbreak, the USN remains the same on all subsequent updates through the rest of the 24-hour news cycle. This applies to all types of story.

Exceptions:

A corrected story should take the same USN as the story it replaces. The next update in the series should take a new USN which remains on all subsequent updates. Market reports each take a separate USN.

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 17:03, 18 January 2012.

Photos

- A Brief Guide to Standards, Photoshop and Captions

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 21:52, 18 March 2010.

A Brief Guide to Standards, Photoshop and Captions

Contents

- 1 General
  - 1.1 Accuracy
  - 1.2 Independence
  - 1.3 Freedom from Bias
  - 1.4 Integrity
- 2 Photoshop
  - 2.1 Rules
  - 2.2 Guidelines
  - 2.3 Technical Guidelines
  - 2.4 To Recap
- 3 Set-ups / Staging of Pictures
- 4 Accuracy in Captions
- 5 Sensitive Images in a Controlled Environment
- 6 Photo Opportunities
- 7 Caption examples

General

Everything we do as Reuters journalists has to be independent, free from bias and executed with the utmost integrity. These are our core values and stem from the Reuters Trust Principles.

Reuters Journalists:

- Always hold accuracy sacrosanct.
- Always correct an error openly.
- Always strive for balance and freedom from bias.
- Always reveal a conflict of interest to a manager.
- Always respect privileged information.
- Always protect their sources from the authorities.
- Always guard against putting their opinion in a news story or editorializing.
- Never fabricate or plagiarise.
- Never alter a still or moving image beyond the requirements of normal image enhancement.
- Never pay for a story and never accept a bribe.

Accuracy

Accuracy means that our images and stories must reflect reality. Reuters is transparent about errors. We correct them promptly and clearly, whether in a story, a caption, a graphic or a script.

Independence

Independence is the essence of our reputation as a "stateless" global news organisation and fundamental to the trust that allows us to report impartially from all sides of a conflict or dispute. Our independence stems not only from the structure of Reuters but also from our duty as journalists to avoid conflicts of interest or situations that could give rise to a perception of a conflict.

Freedom from Bias

Reuters would not be Reuters without freedom from bias. This neutrality is a hallmark of our news brand and allows us to work on all sides of an issue, conflict or dispute without any agenda other than accurate, fair reporting.

Integrity

Integrity requires us to adhere to the highest ethical standards of our profession and to the values enshrined in The Reuters Trust Principles. As a member of the Reuters team, you are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to acceptable professional standards in matters of personal conduct and exhibit a high degree of personal integrity at all times.

Photoshop

Photoshop is a highly sophisticated image manipulation programme. We use only a tiny part of its potential capability to format our pictures, crop and size them and balance the tone and colour.

Materially altering a picture in Photoshop or any other image editing software will lead to dismissal.

Rules

- No additions or deletions to the subject matter of the original image. (thus changing the original content and journalistic integrity of an image)
- No excessive lightening, darkening or blurring of the image. (thus misleading the viewer by disguising certain elements of an image)
- No excessive colour manipulation. (thus dramatically changing the original lighting conditions of an image)

Guidelines

Only minor Photoshop work should be performed in the field. (Especially from laptops). We require only cropping, sizing and levels with resolution set to 300dpi. Where possible, ask your regional or global picture desks to perform any required further Photo-shopping on their calibrated hi-resolution screens. This typically entails lightening/darkening, sharpening, removal of dust and basic colour correction.

When working under prime conditions, some further minor Photo-shopping (performed within the above rules) is acceptable.

This includes basic colour correction, subtle lightening/darkening of zones, sharpening, removal of dust and other minor adjustments that fall within the above rules. Reuters recommendations on the technical settings for these adjustments appear below. The level of Photoshop privileges granted to photographers should be at the discretion of the Chief/Senior Photographers within the above guidelines. All photographers should understand the limitations of their laptop screens and their working environments.

Photographers should trust the regional and global pictures desks to carry out the basic functions to prepare their images for the wire. All EiCs and sub editors from regional and the global desks will be trained in the use of Photoshop by qualified Adobe trainers to a standard set by senior pictures staff. The photographer can always make recommendations via the Duty Editor. Ask the desk to lighten the face, darken the left side, lift the shadows etc. Good communication with the desk is essential.

Technical Guidelines

Cloning, Healing or Brush Tools are not to be used. The single exception to this rule is sensor dust removal. The cloning tool will only be used below the 100 pixels radius setting. Unless performed on a well-calibrated screen under good working conditions we strongly recommend photographers to request dust removal by pictures desks.

Saturation should not be used. It affects image quality and cannot be judged well on a laptop screen and adds nothing more than what can be achieved in levels.

Colour Balance adjustment should be kept to the minimum, especially on laptop screens which tend to have a blue dominance.

Levels should only be adjusted to the start points of the histogram graph on both shadows and highlights.

Auto Levels should not be used.

The Burn Tool in most cases should only used to subtly darken areas that have been overexposed. When the burn tool is used in shadows a visible element of everything that can be seen in the raw file must remain visible.

Highlights and Shadows can be toned by using the selective highlights tool, a feather of 25-30 and then adjusted in curves.

The Lasso Tool should not be used when using a laptop to file pictures. It is essential that great care is taken with this tool to avoid the 'halo' effect which is produced when the feathering is too great and the tonal change 'bleeds over' into the unselected zone. Likewise, not enough feathering will produce a vivid jagged edge to the lasso area. Typically a feathering setting of between 5 and 20 pixels is used, depending on the size and positioning of the zone. Again we strongly recommend this is handled by desks.

The Eye Dropper can be used on a neutral gray area to set colour. But is dependent on the quality of the computer screen to determine if you are in fact seeing a real gray! Sharpening should be set at zero (0) in the camera. Pictures may then be sharpened by 300% at a radius of 0.3, threshold 0, in Photoshop.

No selective area sharpening should be done.

Third-party Sharpening Plug-ins are not permitted.

Third-party Noise-Reduction Plug-ins should be avoided but are acceptable if Chief Photographers are convinced they are being used properly.

Camera Settings, in particular saturation (and Image Styles in the Canon 5D) should be set to "standard" with the exception of in-camera sharpening which should be turned OFF. The Color setting Adobe RGB is the Reuters standard.

Multiple-Exposure pictures must be clearly identified in the caption and drawn to the attention of pictures desks before transmission.

To Recap

Allowed:

- Cropping
- Adjustment of Levels to histogram limits
- Minor colour correction
- Sharpening at 300%, 0.3, 0
- Careful use of lasso tool
- Subtle use of burn tool
- Adjustment of highlights and shadows
- Eye dropper to check/set gray

Not Allowed:

- Additions or deletions to image
- Cloning & Healing tool (except dust)
- Airbrush, brush, paint
- Selective area sharpening
- Excessive lightening/darkening
- Excessive colour tone change

- Auto levels
- Blurring
- Eraser tool
- Quick Mask
- In-camera sharpening
- In-camera saturation styles

The above list is not exhaustive. Global Pictures Desk Deputy Editor Pedja Kujundzic and Kevin Coombs will be available to answer any questions on use of other functions not mentioned above including latest CS2 and upcoming CS3 functions.

Set-ups / Staging of Pictures

Reuters photographers, staff and freelance, must not stage or re-enact news events. They may not direct the subjects of their images or add, remove or move objects on a news assignment. Our news photography must depict reality. Any attempt to alter that reality constitutes fabrication and can lead to disciplinary action, including dismissal.

Photographers may direct the subjects of portraits, formal interviews and non-news feature images needed to illustrate a story. The caption must not mislead the reader into believing these images are spontaneous.

The presence of the media can often influence how subjects behave. When the behavior shown is the result of the media's presence, our captions must make that clear. If photographers from outside Reuters orchestrate or set up scenes, it is still a set-up.

The best news photography occurs when the presence of the camera is not noticeable. Photographers should be as unobtrusive as possible to avoid influencing events and consider using long lenses.

Composite images that show the progression of an event (e.g. lunar eclipse, time lapse) must indicate the technique in their captions. They are never acceptable in a news assignment. Captions must also make clear when a specialty lens (e.g. lens babies, tilt-shift lenses) or a special technique (e.g. soft focus, zooming) has been used to create an image in portraiture or on a features assignment.

Handout images from outside sources should be examined carefully for accuracy and news value. Questionable handout images will be reviewed by the Duty Editor in Charge, whose decision is final on whether they are published. Photographers or Editors who pass on handout images must alert the Duty EIC if the image is suspect.

Accuracy in Captions

Just as our news photographs must reflect reality, so too should our captions. They must adhere to the basic Reuters rules of accuracy and freedom from bias and must answer the basic questions of good journalism. Who is in the picture? Where was it taken? When was it taken? What does it show? Why is a subject doing a particular thing?

Captions are written in the present tense and should use concise, simple English. They generally consist of a single sentence but a second sentence should be added if additional context or explanation is required.

Contentious information, like death tolls in conflict, must be sourced. The caption must explain the circumstances in which a photograph was taken and state the correct date.

Captions must not contain assumptions by the photographer about what might have happened, even when a situation seems likely. Explain only what you have witnessed. All other information about an event must be sourced unless you are certain of your information.

Captions also should not make assumptions about what a person is thinking e.g. England captain David Beckham ponders his future after his team was knocked out of the World Cup soccer finals ... Stick to what the photo shows and what you know.

The Duty Editor-in-Charge will come back to the photographer or the Chief Photographer with questions if the caption does not fully explain the image. For this reason, photographers must remain contactable until their work is published.

Sensitive Images in a Controlled Environment

Some of our photographs are taken under controlled conditions in which photographers cannot operate freely. This is particularly true during conflicts and in countries where the media's movements are restricted.

Such photographs must say if the image was taken during an organised or escorted visit unless the photographer was truly free to work independently. The circumstances can usually be indicated in a short, second sentence in the caption. For examples, please see Appendix 'A' of the complete Guide to Caption-Writing for Reuters.

Photo Opportunities

Reuters does not stage news photos. Sometimes, subjects may strike an artificial pose, such as at a product launch, a show business event or a sports victory ceremony or when requested to do so to illustrate a feature. In some circumstances, such as during demonstrations, civil unrest, street celebrations or conflict, the presence of photographers and television crews may prompt subjects to act abnormally.

These images should be few and can be clichÃ©s. They must be clearly captioned to show the reader that the actions are not spontaneous and to explain the context. There are many ways to describe the situation without saying that the subject "poses" for a photograph, though we should say so when it is clearly the case.

See below a selection of examples. For a more complete set, with pictures, please see Appendix 'F' of the complete Guide to Caption Writing for Reuters.

The Global Pictures Desk will flag any possible issues to the Chief Photographer who carries the responsibility for the file from the region in question.

Caption examples

- *An employee of Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd shows the media the company's new 32-Gigabit NAND flash memory card (top) and chip during a news conference in Seoul September 11, 2006. Samsung said it has developed the world's first 32-Gigabit NAND flash memory devices. REUTERS/Kim Kyung-Hoon (SOUTH KOREA)*
- *Actress Helen Mirren poses with the Coppa Volpi at the Venice Film Festival September 9, 2006. Mirren won the Best Actress award for her role in director Stephen Frears' movie 'The Queen'. REUTERS/Fabrizio Bensch (ITALY)*
- *A man lies dead in the street May 7 after a NATO daylight air raid near a market over the town of Nis some 200 kilometres south of Belgrade. The Yugoslav army took media to show them damage it said the raid caused to two residential areas and a hospital. REUTERS/Desmond Boylan*
- *Nobel Peace prize winner Wangari Maathai hugs a tree for photographers in Nairobi October 9, 2004. Maathai, a Kenyan, became the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize, the first Nobel given to an environmentalist. REUTERS/Radu Sigheti*
- *A Mexican soccer fan wearing a traditional sombrero waves his country's flag at a photographer before a Copa America quarterfinal match against Brazil at Miguel Grau stadium in Piura, July 18, 2004. REUTERS/Henry Romero*

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 15:33, 6 October 2008.

Video

- A Brief Guide to the Standards and Values of Reuters Video News
- The Complete Reuters Video News Handbook

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 14:22, 1 July 2008.

A Brief Guide to the Standards and Values of Reuters Video News

Contents

- 1 General
  - 1.1 Accuracy
  - 1.2 Independence
  - 1.3 Freedom from Bias
  - 1.4 Integrity
- 2 Reuters Television

General

Everything we do as Reuters journalists has to be independent, free from bias and executed with the utmost integrity. These are our core values and stem from the Reuters Trust Principles. This is a brief guide to our standards. Full details are available in The Handbook of Reuters Journalism.

Reuters journalists:

- Always hold accuracy sacrosanct.
- Always correct an error openly.
- Always strive for balance and freedom from bias.
- Always reveal a conflict of interest to a manager.
- Always respect privileged information.
- Always protect their sources from the authorities.
- Always guard against putting their opinion in a news story.
- Never fabricate or plagiarise.
- Never alter a still or moving image beyond the requirements of normal image enhancement.
- Never pay for a story and never accept a bribe.

Accuracy

Accuracy means that our images and stories must reflect reality. Reuters is transparent about errors. We correct them promptly and clearly, whether in a story, a caption, a graphic or a script.

Independence

Independence is the essence of our reputation as a "stateless" global news organisation and fundamental to the trust that allows us to report impartially from all sides of a conflict or dispute. Our independence stems not only from the structure of Reuters but also from our duty as journalists to avoid conflicts of interest or situations that could give rise to a perception of a conflict.

Freedom from Bias

Reuters would not be Reuters without freedom from bias. This neutrality is a hallmark of our news brand and allows us to work on all sides of an issue, conflict or dispute without any agenda other than accurate, fair reporting.

Integrity

Integrity requires us to adhere to the highest ethical standards of our profession and to the values enshrined in The Reuters Trust Principles. As a member of the Reuters team, you are expected to accept certain responsibilities, adhere to acceptable professional standards in matters of personal conduct and exhibit a high degree of personal integrity at all times.

Reuters Television

Whenever we are planning, covering or producing television stories, any ethical issues must first be held up to the guiding principles of accuracy, independence, freedom from bias and integrity. We have a duty to report stories accurately and impartially, giving additional information where necessary to clients about how that coverage was gathered, and the source of any video and textual information.

- Our scripts and shot-lists must be clear as to the source of any video material used, whether from Reuters, an allied broadcaster, amateur video, or third party which may have a political or commercial agenda (companies, lobby groups, military, militias, governments etc): e.g. *"â'¦ video provided by the environmental group Greenpeace shows â'¦"* or *"â'¦video downloaded from a Web site known to be used by the group purports to show â'¦"* or *"â'¦amateur video obtained by Reuters â'¦"* With increased distribution of video over the public Internet, we may want to show the streaming video/still photographs as they appear on a PC or mobile handset screen. Producers and camera operators should consult news editors before using this footage, or any other third-party footage or photographs where copyright or authenticity may be an issue.
- The circumstances under which video is gathered may be important. We do not accept

"junkets" from corporate/showbiz entities to cover stories at their expense, we never accept bribes and we do not accept gifts beyond those of nominal value. If we think it is a story we want, we should generally pay our own travel. Sometimes, however, we must travel with other entities as it is the only way to get to a story safely. If, for example, we have gone to the scene of a story as part of a military embed or with an aid agency going to a disaster, we must say so in our script: e.g. *"â'¦ in a trip organised by the Israeli military, journalists were taken toâ'¦"* Various entities often try to manipulate or stage-manage events - from military areas to business and entertainment. If we are restricted from going to certain areas or prevented from asking certain questions, we should make this clear in our copy. If we feel we are being unduly restricted and that the result would be a slanted story, we should be ready - in consultation with higher editorial management - to refuse to cover an event. Organised news events should be identified as such e.g. *"â'¦the CEO was speaking at a live media event organised by the companyâ'¦"*

- The mere presence of television cameras can affect what happens in the area being filmed. If someone is demonstrating something for us, we must say so; if a protest occurs in response to us turning up, we must say so: e.g. *"â'¦residents protested at the scene of the attack after journalists arrived in the area"* or *"â'¦local rescue workers showed the media the bodies of those who died in the disaster."*
- Reuters does not pay newsmakers for stories. However, we deal frequently with third-party material and we must be vigilant to ensure we have legal access to such material, for example in using appropriate Reuters forms in purchasing amateur or freelance video, both for news and archive purposes. We must source material as per the guidelines above, and be circumspect about what we say about such third-party material: e.g. *"â'¦ the video purports to showâ'¦"* We should say in our scripts and shot-lists if we are unable to verify what the video purports to show or when it was shot. There are cases when we do feel obliged to run compelling video, but we should be clear to our subscribers about what we know and what we don't know about the origin and contents of such material.
- We have a duty to show the scene of any story accurately without adding or removing - either physically or electronically - any contents. Reuters Television staff must do only what is minimally necessary to improve the technical quality of video. Our staff must never manipulate or add/remove the contents of video. Audio must never be added which may affect the editorial interpretation of a sequence or story.
- We never fake, fabricate or plagiarise a story. Video stories must not be shot, edited or scripted in a way which misleads the viewer or subscriber. We must tell the story accurately and strive to record events exactly as they happen. As neutral observers, we play no part in an event beyond documenting it. For example, when shooting demonstrations, we need to convey the scale of the event accurately, using wide shots as well as close-ups. We must identify when we use file and never misrepresent the source, location or date of video. We write our own stories based on our own newsgathering (including text and still photographs). When we use another source for information, we must identify that source. We do not lift sections of copy from other news sources, Web sites or online encyclopedias.
- We must issue corrections promptly to subscribers.
- Whenever possible, we should run video in a natural state. In some circumstances, sections of video must be pixillated for legal reasons. If we do this, our scripts should state why.
- Reuters Television journalists must take great care to avoid any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. They must not work for, or be associated with - even in their private lives - business, political, journalistic or military groups which might impact their duties or the perception that they are impartial. Employees are bound by Reuters rules on share holdings in companies they might be required to report on and it is the duty of the television journalist to alert their manager to any potential conflicts of interest.

- Reuters protects our sources of news and vigorously defends the integrity of our journalists. We do not divulge the sources of our content to officials and we resist handing over our raw video to governmental, police or military authorities unless the physical safety of our journalists is under immediate threat. Any requests or demands to hand over our material must be referred immediately to senior editorial management.
- We often have to deal with graphic, sexually explicit and other sensitive material. As an agency we are more likely than a broadcaster to lean on the side of distributing such material for the sake of historical accuracy and context and leave it to the discretion of subscribers as to what they put to air. In extreme circumstances, such as images of execution or torture or sexual scenes of a graphic nature, a senior editor must be consulted on the use or otherwise of the video. We must alert clients boldly in our scripts and slates that graphic or explicit content follows so they may take any measures they deem appropriate to shield their newsroom staff. We must also alert them that higher level discussion might be required in their own news services as to how to treat such material for their audiences. We should be conscious of the sensitivities of our own staff in dealing with such images, allowing those who think they may be impacted by the content to be removed from the process.
- It is not possible to predict or codify every ethical dilemma we might face as journalists. Different laws may also apply in different countries, such as in relation to the filming of children or secret filming. If you are in any doubt about a situation, you must refer the matter to higher editorial management.

Category: Guide to Operations

This page was last modified 14:22, 1 July 2008.

The Reuters General Style Guide

A

Contents

- 1 abattoir
- 2 abbreviations
- 3 -able
- 4 A-bomb
- 5 abortion
- 6 ABS
- 7 abscess
- 8 academic titles
- 9 accept, except
- 10 access
- 11 accessible
- 12 accidentally, not accidently.
- 13 accolade, not acolade.
- 14 accommodate, not accomodate.
- 15 Achilles' heel, tendon
- 16 acknowledgment, not acknowledgement.
- 17 acolyte, not acolite.
- 18 acre
- 19 acronyms
- 20 acting
- 21 activity
- 22 actor
- 23 acute, chronic
- 24 AD
- 25 adage
- 26 adapter, adaptor
- 27 ADB
- 28 additional/in addition to
- 29 adjectives
- 30 ad-lib
- 31 administration
- 32 admiral
- 33 admissible, inadmissible, not admissable
- 34 admit
- 35 ad nauseam
- 36 adoption
- 37 ADR
- 38 adrenaline, not adrenalin
- 39 advance, advancement
- 40 advance planning
- 41 adverbs
- 42 adverse, averse
- 43 advice, advise
- 44 adviser
- 45 aeroplane
- 46 affect, effect

- 47 AFL-CIO
- 48 Afrikaner
- 49 Afrikaans
- 50 aftermath
- 51 AG
- 52 Afterwards, but in American style afterward
- 53 aggravate, annoy
- 54 age
- 55 ageing, but in American style aging
- 56 aged, elderly
- 57 agenda
- 58 AGM
- 59 AIDS
- 60 air base
- 61 Airbus
- 62 aircraft
- 63 air fare
- 64 air force
- 65 Air Force One
- 66 Air France-KLM
- 67 airlift
- 68 airlines
- 69 air raid
- 70 air strike
- 71 alibi
- 72 Al Jazeera
- 73 al Qaeda
- 74 albino, albinos
- 75 alfresco
- 76 alias
- 77 all right
- 78 all rounder
- 79 All Saints' Day
- 80 all-time, all time
- 81 Allahu akbar
- 82 allege
- 83 allot, allotting, allotted
- 84 allude, refer
- 85 allusion, illusion
- 86 Almaty
- 87 almost exactly
- 88 alpine
- 89 altar, alter
- 90 altercation
- 91 alternate, alternative
- 92 altitudes
- 93 Aluminium
- 94 alumnus (man) alumna (woman) alumni (plural)
- 95 Alzheimer’s disease
- 96 a.m.

- 97 AM
- 98 ambassador
- 99 ambience, not ambiance.
- 100 American
- 101 American Indian
- 102 American spelling
- 103 Americas
- 104 America's Cup
- 105 amid
- 106 amok, not amock or amuck.
- 107 among, between
- 108 ampersand
- 109 anaemia, anaemic but anemia, anemic is American style.
- 110 analog, not analogue
- 111 analysts
- 112 ancestor
- 113 and
- 114 annex
- 115 annual meeting
- 116 another
- 117 Antarctic, Antarctica
- 118 antennae, antennas
- 119 Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty
- 120 anticipate, expect
- 121 anti-
- 122 antitrust
- 123 aneurysm
- 124 anxious, eager
- 125 any more
- 126 anything
- 127 anywhere
- 128 anyone, any one
- 129 APEC
- 130 apostolic delegate
- 131 apostrophes
- 132 appeal
- 133 appraise, apprise
- 134 appreciation
- 135 approximately
- 136 April Fool's Day
- 137 Arab names
- 138 arbitrator, arbiter, mediator
- 139 archaeology, but American style is archeology
- 140 Arctic Sea, Arctic Circle
- 141 Argentina, Argentine
- 142 aroma
- 143 armada
- 144 army
- 145 around

- 146 artefact,but American style is artifact
- 147 arrest
- 148 as
- 149 as, like
- 150 ASEAN
- 151 Asian subcontinent
- 152 assassin, assassination
- 153 assert
- 154 Astana
- 155 Asiatic
- 156 at the present time, at this time
- 157 athlete’s foot
- 158 attache
- 159 attempt
- 160 ATM
- 161 audiovisual
- 162 augur, auger
- 163 Australian Labor Party
- 164 Autarchy, autarky
- 165 author
- 166 automaker
- 167 auxiliary, not auxilliary.
- 168 averages
- 169 AU
- 170 averse
- 171 awakened
- 172 awe-struck
- 173 awhile, a while
- 174 axe, axed, axeing; but American style is ax, axed, axing

abattoir

Not abbatoir.

abbreviations

Avoid inventing acronyms or abbreviations and never invent short spellings of proper company names. We may use some abbreviations for brevity but never at the expense of clarity. A reader should never have to read backwards to find out what an abbreviation means. Use a generic term, e.g. the company or the organisation, rather than stud a story with abbreviations, especially where more than one or two sets of initials are involved.

Space constraints on alerts and headlines make it tempting to invent new short forms for words and create company names, but a better and more accurate headline is almost always possible. It is not acceptable to change the spelling of a proper company name. An abbreviation, if widely known, should be used instead, e.g. IBM not Intl Bus. Mach.. Some very common abbreviations, e.g. AIDS, NATO, may be used alone at first reference with the full name given subsequently. These are listed in the quick reference entries. Abbreviations of two initials take full stops, e.g. U.S. and U.N. The

exceptions are EU (European Union) and UK (United Kingdom). The full stops may be omitted in alerts and headlines if there are space constraints. Abbreviations of three or more initials and acronyms (words composed of initials or initial syllables) do not take full stops, e.g. IBM, UNICEF, WEU. If initials are well known, e.g. PLO, you need not bracket the initials after the first full reference. You may write The Palestine Liberation Organisation has sent two envoys ... and then a PLO statement said the two men would ... If the institution is little known, bracket the initials after the first reference, e.g. The Western European Union (WEU) decided on Tuesday. In the case of foreign groups, where the word order changes in the English translation, bracket the initials, e.g. the Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Do not bracket initials after a first reference if you are not going to use the initials again lower in the story. Form the plural of abbreviations by adding a lower-case s without an apostrophe, e.g. ICBMs not ICBM's or ICBMS. Do not use full stops when abbreviating the names of months in datelines. The style is Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec. In tabulated lists use only the first three letters for all months, e.g. Jan, Jun, Jul. Abbreviate the names of months in text when they are used with a specific date, e.g. Jan. 19, Dec. 25. Use capital letters when abbreviating capitalised words, lower case for uncapitalised phrases, e.g. ASEAN but mph, bpd.

-able

Words ending in a silent -e normally drop the "e" before the -able, e.g. arguable. Words ending in -ce or -ge do not, e.g. changeable, ageing.

A-bomb

Use atomic bomb, unless in a direct quote.

abortion

Unless quoting someone, refer to aborted foetuses rather than unborn babies. Describe those campaigning for a woman's right to have an abortion as abortion rights campaigners and those campaigning against abortion rights as anti-abortion campaigners. Terms such as pro-choice, pro-life and pro-abortion are open to dispute and should be avoided.

ABS

Asset-backed securities: securities collateralised by assets such as car loans and credit card receivables, which can be seized if the debtor defaults. ABS are created by the process of securitisation whereby banks pool types of loans and use them as collateral or security against a bond issue.

abscess

academic titles

Capitalise when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Professor John Smith.

accept, except

Accept is to take or receive; except is to leave out.

access

Do not use as a verb.

accessible

accidentally, not accidently.

accolade, not acolade.

accommodate, not accomodate.

Achilles' heel, tendon

Note apostrophe and capitalisation.

acknowledgment, not acknowledgement.

acolyte, not acolite.

acre

To convert to hectares roughly multiply by 2 and divide by 5. To convert precisely multiply by 0.405.

acronyms

Avoid if at all possible. Very few are understandable at first reference. Most are only of use to a specialised audience that has seen them several times before. Where possible replace with a noun such as the committee, the organisation, the inquiry.

acting

Do not capitalise before a title, acting Chairman and Chief Executive Paulo Georgio.

activity

The word can often be dropped, as in sporting activity, golfing activity, leisure activity, political activity.

actor

actor (man), actress (woman).

acute, chronic

Acute is coming to a crisis, chronic is lasting a long time or deep-seated. Be specific when writing about disease or problems.

AD

Anno Domini (in the year of our Lord). Precedes the date, e.g. AD 73. But 234 BC (Before Christ).

adage

A proverb or old saying. Old adage is tautologous.

adapter, adaptor

An adapter is the person who adapts something. An adaptor is a device for connecting parts of different sizes. American style uses adapter for both.

ADB

Asian Development Bank. A multilateral development finance institution, with headquarters in Manila, dedicated to reducing poverty in Asia and the Pacific. Owned by member countries, mostly from the region.

additional/in addition to

Use more or and.

adjectives

Use sparingly. Inject colour into copy with strong verbs and facts, rather than adjectives. If you use more than two adjectives before a single noun then rewrite the sentence. A reader struggles with The one-eyed poverty-stricken Greek house painter. Avoid adjectives that imply judgment, e.g. a hard-line speech, a glowing tribute, a staunch conservative. Depending on where they stand, some people might consider the speech moderate, the tribute fulsome or the conservative a die-hard reactionary. When using an adjective and a noun together as an adjective, hyphenate them, e.g. a blue-chip share, high-caste Hindus. When using an adjective and the past participle of a verb together adjectivally, hyphenate them, e.g. old-fashioned morality, rose-tinted spectacles. Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. the artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do so however if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

ad-lib

Hyphenated for verb, noun and adjective.

administration

Always lower case, e.g. the Bush administration. See also capitalisation.

admiral

See capitalisation.

admissible, inadmissible, not admissable

Admissions of responsibility is officialese. Did they do it or didn't they?

admit

Use with care. If you say someone admitted something you imply that it had previously been concealed or that there is an element of guilt. Plain said is usually better.

ad nauseam

adoption

Refer to a child's adoptive status only when the fact is clearly significant. Use the term "birth mother" to refer to the woman who gave birth to a child, if a distinction must be made with the woman who raised the child. "Birth father" and "birth parent" are also preferred style. Do not use "real" or "natural" to describe parents or children. Avoid loaded and dated phrases such as "give away a child", "give up for adoption" and "unwanted child". "Adoptive" as an adjective can refer to parents or the general subject of adoption. Try to describe actions instead of creating labels such as "adopted child" e.g. "Hollywood actress Sharon Celebrity, who gave birth to a daughter on Friday, has two other children. She adopted Pixie, 4, and Tinkerbell, 2, during her previous marriage to actor Tim Hunk." Be wary of cultural bias or value judgments in covering international adoptions and disputes over parental rights involving families from different cultures or socio-economic backgrounds.

ADR

American Depositary Receipt. Certificates tradeable like shares that allow U.S. investors to buy stock in an overseas company while realising capital gains and dividends in dollars.

adrenaline, not adrenalin

advance, advancement

Advance is progress; advancement is promotion.

advance planning

A tautology.

adverbs

Like adjectives they should be used sparingly. Avoid adverbs that imply judgment, e.g. generously, harshly, and sternly. Put the adverb between the auxiliary verb and the past participle, e.g. France has already refused... not France already has refused ... However, American usage favours keeping the auxiliary verb and past participle together, with the adverb either before or after the compound verb. e.g. France has refused already... or France already has refused...

adverse, averse

Adverse is contrary, opposed or unfavourable. Averse is disinclined to or reluctant. I am averse to go camping in adverse weather.

advice, advise

Advice is the noun, advise is the verb.

adviser

Not advisor.

aeroplane

Use aircraft. Do not use the U.S. term airplane. In many cases stories need the specific type of aircraft.

affect, effect

affect is a verb meaning to influence, effect is usually a noun meaning outcome or consequence, e.g. The effect of the decision will affect the company’s decision. Effect as verb means to accomplish, e.g. He effected his escape with the aid of his wife. However, affect is a vague word; be more precise. Effect is usually word-spinning. He escaped... is simpler.

AFL-ClO

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

Afrikaner

A white South African, usually of Dutch descent.

Afrikaans

The language spoken by Afrikaners.

aftermath

Prefer results. Use after rather than in the aftermath of.

AG

German company title: abbreviation of Aktiengesellschaft, a joint-stock company.

Afterwards, but in American style afterward

aggravate, annoy

Aggravate makes worse. Do not use in the sense of to irritate. Annoy is to cause trouble to someone.

age

Use numerals for all ages, e.g. the 6-year-old girl, the 9-year-old boy. The 66-year-old president or an 18-year-old youth are fine. Avoid the 66-year-old Smith, which suggests he is being distinguished from another, 65-year-old Smith; said instead, in a simple way, Smith, who is 66, or just Smith, 66,.

ageing, but in American style aging

aged, elderly

Avoid, because the terms are always relative. In some societies a 50-year-old is already aged. In others a sprightly 90-year-old who has just written a novel or run a marathon would object to being called aged or elderly.

agenda

Agenda singular, agendas plural.

AGM

Use annual meeting.

AIDS

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The term AIDS applies to the most advanced stages of HIV infection. The initials AIDS and HIV are used at first reference with the full name given lower in the story. Do not write HIV virus, which is redundant. See medical stories on the need for caution in handling stories about reputed cures for AIDS.

air base

Two words.

Airbus

One word, capitalised, unhyphenated.

aircraft

Prefer to plane. Most airliners and military aircraft are jets so there is normally no need to specify that an aircraft is a jet. Warplane – is one word. Do not use the American term airplane or the term fighter jet. Capitalise but do not put in quotation marks the names of aircraft, e.g. Concorde, Flogger, Tomcat. When the number designating an aircraft is preceded by a letter or letters, hyphenate, e.g. Boeing 747 but DC-10, F-111. Be specific when giving aircraft models in economic stories because there are cost differences, e.g. Boeing 747-400 not just Boeing 747. Use makers' names in the form given in Jane's All the World's Aircraft, e.g. MiG-21. Give numerals for aircraft speeds, e.g. Mach 1 not Mach one. Aircraft names use a hyphen when changing from letters to figures, no hyphen when adding a letter to figures, eg F-15 Eagle/747B, but Airbus 3000 is an exception.

air fare

Two words.

air force

Two words.

Air Force One

This is the radio call sign of any fixed-wing aircraft used by the president of the United States. The U.S. Marine Corps is responsible for presidential helicopter support. Marine One is the radio call sign of any helicopter used by the president.

Air France-KLM

Note hyphen

airlift

Do not use as a synonym for fly, e.g. The injured man was airlifted to hospital. Reserve it for shuttle services, e.g. The United States airlifted 50,000 troops to the Gulf.

airlines

Airlines vary widely in their use of air line(s), airline(s) or airways as part of their name. Check the spelling on the company's Web site.

air raid

Two words.

air strike

Two words.

alibi

Not a synonym for an excuse. It means a claim to have been elsewhere at the time of an offence.

Al Jazeera

Qatar television station. Use upper case A and no hyphen since this is how the broadcaster describes itself in English. Refer to as an Arab news channel broadcasting in Arabic and in English.

al Qaeda

Created by Osama bin Laden in the late 1980s, al Qaeda ("The Base") is a militant movement that supports violent attacks on the West, Israel and governments in Muslim countries allied to the West that it believes prevent the creation of a 'pure' Islamic world. The movement became more diffuse after the U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and some key figures were captured or killed. However, new wings have emerged in Saudi Arabia, Iraq and North Africa.

Now the term al Qaeda is used by different people to mean different things. When authorities speak about an "al Qaeda plot", we should try to pin down whether they mean it was ordered and directed by "core al Qaeda" or generally inspired by the anti-Western ideology of bin Laden.

albino, albinos

alfresco

Use in the open air, or outdoors.

alias

Refers only to assumption of a false name, not an entire false identity or profession.

all right

Not alright.

all rounder

Two words, e.g. a cricketer who bats and bowls.

All Saints' Day

November 1. Note apostrophe.

all-time, all time

The greatest singer of all time, but an all-time low. Do not write an all-time record. It is simply a record. Always ensure superlatives such as all-time high are checked and sourced..

Allahu akbar

God is Greatest (not, as often written, God is Great), a common Muslim rallying cry. Also chanted when Muslims perform their five daily prayers.

allege

Avoid. Do not report allegations without saying who made them. Use of the word alleged before a defamatory statement does not provide immunity against an action for libel. Do not use allegedly.

allot, allotting, allotted

allude, refer

Allude means to refer to in passing without making an explicit mention. Refer means to mention directly. He alluded to the sins of his past and referred to his criminal record.

allusion, illusion

Allusion is a reference in passing. Illusion is a false impression or a delusion.

Almaty

Not Alma-Ata. The biggest city in Kazakhstan and the country's commercial hub. The capital was shifted to Astana in 1997.

almost exactly

It is either exact, or not.

alpine

lower case, except for Alpine skiing.

altar, alter

Altar is a table used for religious services. Alter is to change. They altered the altar to make it fit the church.

altercation

An altercation is an argument or heated exchange of words, not a fight.

alternate, alternative

Alternate means that A and B take turns, alternative that you have a choice between A and B. There can only be two alternatives. Any more and you face choices, options or possibilities.

altitudes

Convert metres to feet not yards when giving altitudes.

Aluminium

But aluminum in American style.

alumnus (man) alumna (woman) alumni (plural)

Alzheimer’s disease

A progressive, incurable and disabling disease leading to severe dementia. Although it usually occurs in elderly people it is not synonymous with dementia or senility.

a.m.

Time, e.g. 6 a.m., 6:45 a.m.

AM

The amplitude modulation method of radio transmission.

ambassador

Use for a man or a woman.

ambience, not ambiance.

American

As a noun this may be used to describe a U.S. citizen.

American Indian

Acceptable but Native American (capitalised) is preferred, bearing in mind that this includes e.g. Inuit who are not Indians. Where possible, be more specific and give the name of the tribe (eg. Navajo, Cherokee). See race

American spelling

There are two generally accepted spelling systems for the English language. Our global client base are accustomed to reading both. Copy orginating in the Americas should follow North American spelling conventions, such as *color, defense, aging, caliber,* etc. Copy orginating elsewhere should follow British spelling norms. At all times stick to official spellings for American names and titles, such as U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Watch out for regional words that non-English language services and clients will find difficult to understand and translate. In American sports coverage, use American terms and spellings e.g. *center, maneuver, defense, offense, ballclub, postseason, preseason, lineman, line up, halfback, doubleheader.*

Americas

Includes South American states.

America's Cup

The sailing trophy, named after the yacht America, takes an apostrophe.

amid

Not amidst. However, amid is a sign of thoughtless writing; there is always a better way to express this.

amok, not amock or amuck.

among, between

Between is restricted to two choices or two parties. Among is for several options or parties. Use between in referring to bilateral contacts e.g. relations between France and Germany. Use among for a collective linkage, e.g. relations among the NATO states. Be careful to use between if there are just two groups to choose from, even though it looks like several. It was hard to decide between a touring holiday in France, Belgium and Spain or in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It was hard to decide among a holiday in France, in Belgium or in Spain.

ampersand

Do not use, instead use 'and' in full, even in company names.

anaemia, anaemic but anemia, anemic is American style.

analog, not analogue

analysts

Do not use analysts alone, but qualify -- political analysts, stock market analysts.

ancestor

One from whom someone is descended. Do not use to mean predecessor.

and

Do not start a sentence with 'and'.

annex

Not annexe, for both verb and noun.

annual meeting

Lower case. For companies use annual meeting rather than annual general meeting.

another

Avoid when you are trying to say additional or extra. It should be used only when referring to things of the same type, size and number. Two teams were at full strength; another two were short of players. In most instances it can simply be omitted. Three men died in the crash and three were injured.

Antarctic, Antarctica

Not Antartic.

antennae, antennas

Antennae are insect feelers. Antennas are aerials.

Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty

ABM Treaty on second reference.

anticipate, expect

These are not synonyms. If you anticipate something, you not only expect it but take precautionary action to deal with it.

anti-

Hyphenate in most cases. Antitrust is an exception..

antitrust

One word. Largely an American term that refers to government policy or law that restrains monopolistic or anti-competitive behaviour by businesses. The term originated in late 19th century United States where businesses were often merged into large industry wide holding companies or trusts.

aneurysm

Not aneurism.

anxious, eager

Anxious means uneasy with fear or desire. Prefer eager if the promised experience is desirable. I am anxious about going to the dentist but eager to go the party.

any more

Two words

anything

One word.

anywhere

One word.

anyone, any one

Anyone can do that, but any one among them is guilty. When it is two words the emphasis is on the second word. Similarly with anybody and any body.

APEC

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation, aimed at promoting regional trade and economic co-operation. 21 members.

apostolic delegate

See Roman Catholic Church.

apostrophes

apostrophes: Use the apostrophe according to the following rules, unless to do so would lead to a word that looked or sounded very strange.

Singular words and plural words not ending in s form the possessive by adding ‘s, e.g. Boeing’s new airliner, the children’s books. Plural words already ending in s form the possessive by adding the apostrophe alone, e.g. the soldiers’ weapons. There is usually no problem about using the apostrophe with words ending in s. the class’s performance, the princesses’ return, Shultz’s car are all acceptable because they can be pronounced easily. Some words would look or sound so odd, e.g. Paris’s reputation, Tunis’s main prison or Woolworths’s results that it best to write your way out of trouble. Recast such phrases, e.g. the son of the Dukasises, the reputation of Paris, the main prison in Tunis and results from Woolworths. Companies which end in s like Qantas or Optus might also appear ugly with the ‘s possessive. The best option is to avoid if possible. Reuters does not take an apostrophe, the only exception being in connection with the founder’s name, e.g. Reuter’s birthplace in Kassel. Note that it’s is a contraction of it is. The possessive form of it is its. Do not use an apostrophe in for example the 1990s or abbreviations such as NCOs. Joint possession: use the possessive form only after the last word if ownership is joint, e.g. Fred and Sylvia's apartment, but the possessive of both words if the objects and individually owned, e.g. Fred's And Sylvia's books.

appeal

The verb takes a preposition. You appeal against a decision, not appeal a decision.

appraise, apprise

Appraise is to set a value on or to price, apprise is to inform.

appreciation

Increase in an asset's value, as opposed to depreciation

approximately

About is shorter and simpler. So is almost or nearly.

April Fool's Day

One fool and one day, but All Fools’ Day.

Arab names

Reuters style is to end Arab names in i rather than y (Ali not Aly, Gaddafi not Gaddafy). The words al and el both mean the. They are usually in lower case and followed by a hyphen. We prefer al- to el- but should use el- if that is how the person spells his or her name in English. In personal names starting al- or el- include the particle only at first reference, e.g. Syrian President Bashar al-Assad at first reference, thereafter Assad. In place and other names the particle is retained at second reference, e.g. al-Arish, (the newspaper) al-Akhbar. Particles that go in lower case are ait (Mohamed ait Atta) bin and bint (Aziza bint Ahmed), ben (Ahmed ben Bella), bar, bou and ould (Moktar ould Daddah). See also sheikh.

arbitrator, arbiter, mediator

An arbitrator or arbiter is appointed to make a decision and hand down a ruling. A mediator tries to produce a compromise agreed by both parties in a dispute.

archaeology, but American style is archeology

Arctic Sea, Arctic Circle

But arctic wind, arctic cold.

Argentina, Argentine

Not the Argentine as a noun or Argentinian as an adjective.

aroma

Do not use for unpleasant smells. It means a spicy fragrance or something with particular charm. It makes no sense to write the aroma of defeat.

armada

A fleet of armed ships. Do not use for a collection of pleasure boats.

army

Never capitalised when referring to the service as a whole, e.g. the U.S. army, the French army. Exceptions are armies that have a unique name, e.g. the Palestine Liberation Army, the Red Army. Capitalise army when referring to a specific formation, e.g. the U.S. 1st Army, the British 8th Army. Use figures for military units: 1st Army not First Army. However, American style capitalises all references to U.S. forces – U.S. Army, the Army, Army regulations.

around

Use about for approximation -- about 30, not around 30.

artefact,but American style is artifact

arrest

to avoid prejudging the issue, do not say arrested for murder, say arrested on a charge of murder; see also allege.

as

An overused conjunction, especially in leads, to link two developments that may have only a distant connection and may occur in different time frames, e.g. Jones issued new threats against Ruritania as Brown considered his options in the region. Use with restraint, preferably when actions are both contemporaneous and closely linked, e.g. Smith leaped out of the window as Jones kicked down the door. As substitutes use and, when, because.

as, like

As compares verbs, like compares nouns. He fought as a hero should, but he acted like a hero.

ASEAN

Association of South East Asian Nations, which groups Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. See www.aseansec.org

Asian subcontinent

Use South Asia for the region that includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

assassin, assassination

Restrict to the killing of a prominent person for political motives.

assert

It can mean to vindicate, so use with care. Plain said is better.

Astana

The capital of Kazakhstan. Almaty was the capital until 1997.

Asiatic

Use Asian.

at the present time, at this time

Use now.

athlete’s foot

attache

Not a formal title: lower case.

attempt

Try is shorter, better

ATM

Automated teller machine, but spell out later. ATM machine is tautologous.

audiovisual

One word, no hyphen.

augur, auger

Augur is a soothsayer, or to foretell by signs. It augurs success. Auger is a carpenter's tool for boring.

Australian Labor Party

(not Labour)

Autarchy, autarky

Autarchy means absolute power and autarky is self-sufficiency. Use plain words instead to remove the confusion.

author

Man or woman. As a verb use write.

automaker

One word (American usage). Also steelmaker, toymaker, drugmaker etc. Similarly autoworkers, steelworkers, etc.

auxiliary, not auxilliary.

averages

Place the word average where it correctly qualifies the item or quantity intended, e.g. Reporters drink an average of six cups of coffee a day. (Not: the average reporter drinks six cups of coffee a day). There are three types:(most often used) is calculated by adding all the constituent parts together and dividing by the number of parts.The middle value, meaning the number of values above it is the same as the number below it. The most commonly occurring value.

Average takes a singular or plural verb according to what it refers. The average age is 24, but an average of three men die each day.

AU

African Union (Addis Ababa). See www.africa-union.org

averse

See adverse, averse.

awakened

Prefer this form to awoken or awaked or awoke.

awe-struck

awhile, a while

I will rest awhile, or I will rest for a while.

axe, axed, axeing; but American style is ax, axed, axing

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 23:37, 14 December 2009.

B

Contents

- 1 Baath Party
- 2 baby boomer
- 3 baby sitter, baby-sit, baby-sitting, baby-sat
- 4 baccalaureate
- 5 back of
- 6 backhand
- 7 backlash
- 8 backwardation
- 9 backwards, but American style is backward
- 10 backyard
- 11 bacterium, bacteria
- 12 bad news, good news
- 13 Baha'i
- 14 Bahamas
- 15 Bahrain
- 16 bail, bale
- 17 bailout
- 18 bait, bate
- 19 Bakhtaran
- 20 balance of payments.
- 21 balance of trade
- 22 balk, not baulk
- 23 ballot, balloted
- 24 ballroom, ballpark, ballplayer
- 25 banister, not bannister.
- 26 bankruptcy
- 27 Bank of China
- 28 Baptist, baptist
- 29 barbecue, not barbeque or bar-b-q
- 30 bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah
- 31 barrel
- 32 barrel, barrelled, barrelling, but American style is barrel, barreled, barreling
- 33 barrel-chested, barrel-house, barrel-organ
- 34 barroom
- 35 Basel
- 36 basically
- 37 basis
- 38 basis point
- 39 Basra
- 40 battalion
- 41 battle
- 42 battledress
- 43 bayonet, bayoneted
- 44 BC
- 45 be with a present participle

- 46 because
- 47 Bedouin
- 48 beg the question
- 49 Beige Book
- 50 Beijing
- 51 beleaguered
- 52 believed
- 53 bellwether
- 54 Belarus, not Belorussia
- 55 Benares
- 56 benefit, benefited
- 57 Benelux
- 58 bereft
- 59 beriberi
- 60 Berlin Wall.
- 61 Bermuda shorts, Bermuda Triangle, Bermuda rig
- 62 Bermudian
- 63 beside, besides
- 64 besiege, not beseige.
- 65 berserk, not beserk.
- 66 best seller, not bestseller.
- 67 bettor
- 68 between, among
- 69 bias, biased.
- 70 biannual, biennial
- 71 Bible, bible
- 72 biblical
- 73 bid, in a bid to
- 74 bight, bite
- 75 billion
- 76 bimonthly, semimonthly
- 77 bin Laden
- 78 bird
- 79 birdie, birdies
- 80 BIS
- 81 biweekly
- 82 black
- 83 black box
- 84 blame
- 85 blast off, blastoff
- 86 blazon, blaze
- 87 blind
- 88 blitzkrieg
- 89 bloc, block
- 90 blockbuster
- 91 blond, blonde
- 92 blue blood
- 93 blueprint
- 94 B’nai B’rith
- 95 bogey, bogie, bogy

- 96 Bombay
- 97 bona fide
- 98 bond
- 99 bondholder
- 100 book titles
- 101 bored with
- 102 born, borne
- 103 Bosporus, not Bosphorus
- 104 both
- 105 boss
- 106 Botswana
- 107 boy
- 108 Boy Scouts
- 109 boycott, embargo
- 110 brackets
- 111 Braille
- 112 brand names
- 113 breach, breech
- 114 break in
- 115 break point
- 116 breast-stroke
- 117 Brent
- 118 Britain
- 119 British Isles
- 120 British spelling
- 121 broach, brooch
- 122 broccoli
- 123 broken quotes
- 124 brownout
- 125 BSE
- 126 Buddha, Buddhism
- 127 budget, budgeted
- 128 buffalo
- 129 buildup
- 130 bull's-eye
- 131 bungee jump
- 132 buoyant
- 133 bureau
- 134 burgeoning
- 135 burglary
- 136 Burma
- 137 Burmese names
- 138 burnt, or burned in American style
- 139 burqa
- 140 bus, buses, busing
- 141 bushel
- 142 but
- 143 by
- 144 Byelorussia
- 145 Byzantine

Baath Party

The pan-Arab political party that has ruled Syria since 1963. Its rival Iraq branch was led by Saddam Hussein and is now believed to be highly active in the insurgency since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

Baathist An individual or group loyal to the Baath Party.

baby boomer

baby sitter, baby-sit, baby-sitting, baby-sat

baccalaureate

back of

Prefer behind.

backhand

One word when used to describe a tennis or badminton stroke.

backlash

Avoid. It is more effective to describe what happened and why.

backwardation

In commodity markets, backwardation is a situation where the cash or near delivery price rises above the price for forward delivery. The forward price is normally higher than the cash price to reflect the added costs of storage and insurance for stocks deliverable at a later date. The opposite of backwardation is contango.

backwards, but American style is backward

backyard

One word as noun or adjective.

bacterium, bacteria

One bacterium, several bacteria. Do not confuse with a virus. Antibiotics are not used to treat viruses.

bad news, good news

Avoid suggesting this in stories. There is no bad or good news for a market since it contains both buyers and sellers.

Baha'i

An adherent of a religion founded by the 19th-century Persian prophet Bahaullah. Note apostrophe. See religious terms

Bahamas

A native of the Bahamas is a Bahamian not a Bahaman.

Bahrain

Use MANAMA, Bahrain, as the dateline.

bail, bale

You bail out a boat or a company in difficulties, but bale out of an aircraft. You post bail in a court. However, American style is bail for both bailing out a boat and bailing out of an aircraft.

bailout

One word.

bait, bate

Use bait on a hook and wait with bated breath to catch a fish.

Bakhtaran

Not Kermanshah, Iran.

balance of payments.

A summary record of a country's net international economic transactions including trade, services, capital movements and unilateral transfers.

balance of trade

Monetary record of a country's net imports and exports of physical merchandise. It can be negative, showing that a country is importing more than it exports, or positive, showing it exports more than it imports.

balk, not baulk

ballot, balloted

ballroom, ballpark, ballplayer

banister, not bannister.

bankruptcy

A company becomes formally bankrupt or insolvent when a court rules it is unable to meet its debts. The ruling may be sought by the company concerned (voluntary) or by creditors. In England, the court appoints an official receiver to manage and eventually realise the debtor’s assets on behalf of the creditors. Terms such as bankruptcy, insolvency and liquidation have different legal meanings in different countries. Be as precise as possible in reporting what a company or court says, especially if a translation is involved. For example, in France the normal form of bankruptcy is faillite; the term banquerote refers to fraudulent bankruptcy and thewre is a danger if they are confused. Similarly, in Germany a collapse known as Bankrott is more serious than a normal liquidation.

In the United States, a company or individual is designated bankrupt when a court enters an order for relief in either a Chapter 11 reorganisation or Chapter 7 liquidation case. They may become bankrupt by virtue of a voluntary filing on their own behalf, or an involuntary filing by a required number of creditors. Applications under bankruptcy rules may be technical manoeuvres and could lead to libel actions if misinterpreted. Business collapses are often progressive rather than sudden. Over-colourful reporting that implies the situation is hopeless may lead to legal problems if the company recovers and claims the reports were false and damaging.

Bank of China

This is a commercial bank, not the central bank. The People's Bank of China is the central bank.

Baptist, baptist

A baptist is someone who baptises. A Baptist is a member of the Protestant denomination. With more than 20 separate Baptist church groups in the United States, it is incorrect to refer to the Baptist Church as a singular entity. The correct reference would be to Baptist Churches or to the specific Baptist group involved, e.g. the Southern Baptist Convention.

barbecue, not barbeque or bar-b-q

bar mitzvah, bat mitzvah

Lower case. Use bar for males and bat for females.

barrel

Volume measurement of liquid in the petroleum industry, equal to 42 U.S. gallons, 35 Imperial gallons or about 0.136 tonnes, depending on specific gravity. Barrels per day (bpd) is a measure of the flow of crude oil production from a field or producing company or a country.

barrel, barrelled, barrelling, but American style is barrel, barreled, barreling

barrel-chested, barrel-house, barrel-organ

barroom

One word.

Basel

Not Basle, Switzerland.

basically

Adds nothing to the meaning or strength of writing. Expunge.

basis

On the basis of, on a voluntary basis etc. There is always a shorter and stronger way to express such ideas.

basis point

The movement of interest rates or yields expressed in hundredths of a percent, so 0.50 percent is 50 basis points.

Basra

Not Basrah, Iraq.

battalion

battle

They battled against poverty, or battled with poverty, not battled poverty. Fought is shorter.

battledress

One word.

bayonet, bayoneted

BC

Before Christ. Write 55 BC, but AD 73.

be with a present participle

There is always a stronger form of the verb. He will be coming/he will come, she will be sewing/she will sew.

because

Do not replace with since or as.

Bedouin

A desert Arab. Same in singular and plural.

beg the question

A misused cliche. It does not mean to prompt an inquiry, but to assume what needs to be proved, or more loosely to evade the question.

Beige Book

A survey of the outlook for the U.S. economy published eight times a year by the Federal Reserve Board. Also known as the Tan Book.

Beijing

Not Peking, China.

beleaguered

Not beleagered. Try to use a shorter word.

believed

Beliefs must be sourced. Do not write, “John Smith was believed to have been killed in an ambush.” Say who believes and why.

bellwether

The lead sheep in a flock. Not bellweather.

Belarus, not Belorussia

Its people are Belarussians.

Benares

Use Varanasi, India.

benefit, benefited

Benelux

Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Explain the term in stories.

bereft

Bereft comes from bereave and means robbed of or deprived. If you are bereft of friends they have all gone away. You are not just lonely because you never had any friends.

beriberi

A disease caused by vitamin deficiency. One word.

Berlin Wall.

Bermuda shorts, Bermuda Triangle, Bermuda rig

Bermudian

Not Bermudan for the inhabitant, but prefer Bermuda as the adjective.

beside, besides

Beside is near or by the side of. Besides is in addition to.

besiege, not beseige.

berserk, not beserk.

best seller, not bestseller.

bettor

Not widely used outside the Americas. Prefer gambler. (American style)

between, among

Between is restricted to two choices or two parties. Among is for several options or parties. Use between in referring to bilateral contacts e.g. relations between France and Germany. Use among for a collective linkage, e.g. relations among the NATO states. Be careful to use between if there are just two groups to choose from, even though it looks like several. It was hard to decide between a touring holiday in France, Belgium and Spain or in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. It was hard to decide among a holiday in France, in Belgium or in Spain.

bias, biased.

biannual, biennial

No hyphen. It’s clearer to write twice-yearly instead of biannual, and every two years rather than biennial.

Bible, bible

Upper case when referring to the book itself. Lower case when used as a metaphor.

biblical

Not Biblical.

bid, in a bid to

Sloppy and verbose. Can usually be removed by rewriting, or replaced with an active verb such as tried to or attempted.

bight, bite

Bight is a wide bay or a coil. You bite with your teeth.

billion

In Reuters services billion means one thousand million. The word billion must be spelled out, although it can be abbreviated to bln if necessary in headlines. Always use figures before million and billion, e.g. 2 billion, 3 million. When reporting a range of figures, use the style 1.2 billion to 1.4 billion not 1.2-1.4 billion. See also figures, trillion.

bimonthly, semimonthly

Avoid. Write every other month for bimonthly and twice a month for semimonthly.

bin Laden

Osama bin Laden. Use bin Laden at second reference. He is now stripped of Saudi citizenship so refer to as Saudi-born.

bird

A bird is an animal, so birds and mammals or birds and reptiles, not birds and animals.

birdie, birdies

One stroke under par in golf.

BIS

Bank for International Settlements, an international organisation that fosters international monetary and financial co-operation and serves as a bank for central banks and international financial organisations. The Basel Committee of the BIS sets standards and guidelines for best banking practice. See www.bis.org

biweekly

This can mean twice a week or once every two weeks. So avoid it.

black

Fine as an adjective, eg "Obama will be the first black U.S. president". As a noun, the plural is acceptable where it might contrast with another group, eg doctors found differences between the treatment offered to whites and blacks. Do not use black as a singular noun -- it is both awkward and offensive. "Barack Obama would be the first black to become U.S. president" is unacceptable. Better to say "Barack Obama will become the first black U.S. president". See race

black box

Popular term for aircraft recording equipment. Although they are not in fact black, the term can be used if it is made clear that the reference is to a plane’s flight recorder or its flight-deck voice recorder.

blame

Treat with caution. In accidents, apportioning blame can cause legal problems. Strong sourcing is required here

blast off, blastoff

One word for the noun and two words for the verb.

blazon, blaze

You blazon, or ostentatiously display, your wealth, and blaze a trail.

blind

Describe people as blind only if they are totally without sight. Otherwise write that their sight is impaired or that they have only partial vision.

blitzkrieg

German for lightning war or violent attack. Use the short form blitz only for heavy air attacks.

bloc, block

A bloc is a combination of units, parties or nations. A block is a lump.

blockbuster

Use sparingly, unless you have figures to support profit, return on investment etc.

blond, blonde

blond for a man, blonde for a woman. But the adjective is always blond.

blue blood

Noun; blue-blooded is the adjective.

blueprint

Tired cliche. Use plan or proposal.

B’nai B’rith

A Jewish service and community organisation. Note apostrophes.

bogey, bogie, bogy

Bogey is a golf term, meaning one stroke above par for a hole. A bogie is a trolley. A bogy is a bugbear or a special object of dread, hence bogyman.

Bombay

Use Mumbai unless it is a proper name e.g. The Bombay Stock Exchange. Similarly we use Chennai (not Madras) and Kolkata (not Calcutta).

bona fide

Avoid.

bond

A bond is a legal contract in which a government, company or institution (the borrower) issues a certificate, which promises to pay holders a specific rate of interest for a fixed duration and then redeem the contract at face value on maturity.

bondholder

One word.

book titles

Books, films, plays, poems, operas, songs and works of art: capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. “The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich”, “The Merchant of Venice”, “Gone with the Wind”.

bored with

Not bored of.

born, borne

He was born on Tuesday (passive). She has borne 10 children (active) and borne the burden of raising them.

Bosporus, not Bosphorus

both

Both sides agreed is tautology, as is They both went to the same play. Write They went to the same play.

boss

This word has pejorative or slang connotations and should not be used in serious contexts, e.g. A presidential aide said his boss... Mafia bosses would be permissible and the word can be used in an informal context, e.g. Bill Smith said he was sick of correcting his boss's spelling. It is acceptable in sports stories as an alternative to manager or coach.

Botswana

Its people are Batswana (sing. and pl.).

boy

Any male over 18 is a man.

Boy Scouts

Now just Scouts.

boycott, embargo

A boycott is the refusal of a group to deal with a person or use a commodity. An embargo is a legal ban on trade.

brackets

If an entire sentence is in brackets, put the full stop (period) inside the closing bracket, e.g. (...reported earlier.) If a sentence has a bracketed section at the end, the full stop goes outside the closing bracket, e.g. -reported earlier). If a bracketed section in the middle of a sentence is followed by a comma, it also goes outside the bracket.

Braille

Capitalised.

brand names

A brand is a symbol or word registered by a manufacturer and protected by law to prevent others from using it. Use a generic equivalent unless the brand name is important to the story. When used, follow the owner’s capitalisation, e.g. Aspro not aspro but aspirin.

breach, breech

Breach is a break, breech is the lower part. A breach in the wall, but a breech birth.

break in

Verb; break-in is the noun.

break point

Two words in tennis scoring.

breast-stroke

Brent

Brent blend is a benchmark crude oil from the British North Sea against which other crude oils are priced.

Britain

Do not use England as a synonym for Britain or the United Kingdom. Britain comprises England, Scotland and Wales. The United Kingdom comprises Britain and Northern Ireland. Use Britain

unless the Irish context is important.

British Isles

A geographical, not political term. They comprise the United Kingdom, islands under the British Crown such as the Channel Islands and Isle of Man, and the Republic of Ireland.

British spelling

There are two generally accepted spelling systems for the English language. Our global client base are accustomed to reading both. Copy orginating in the Americas should follow North American spelling conventions, such as *color, defense, aging, caliber*, etc. Copy orginating elsewhere should follow British spelling norms. At all times stick to official spellings for American names and titles, such as U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Watch out for regional words that non-English language services and clients will find difficult to understand and translate. In American sports coverage, use American terms and spellings e.g. *center, maneuver, defense, offense, ballclub, postseason, preseason, lineman, line up, halfback, doubleheader.*

broach, brooch

Broach is to pierce or open up. Brooch is an ornamental clasp.

broccoli

broken quotes

Do not use if the words quoted are not contentious e.g. He said she was a great soldier. Use if the language is inflammatory or colourful e.g. She said he was a “stinking, rotten coward”.

brownout

Temporary voltage reduction to conserve electric power. A shut down is a blackout.

BSE

bovine spongiform encephalopathy, or mad cow disease.

Buddha, Buddhism

budget, budgeted

buffalo

Plural is buffaloes.

buildup

Noun, but build up as a verb. The adjective is built-up.

bull's-eye

bungee jump

Two words.

buoyant

bureau

plural is bureaux.

burgeoning

An overused adjective. Burgeoning means putting forth shoots or beginning to grow rapidly. Otherwise use growing.

burglary

Legal definitions vary but usually burglary involves entering a building unlawfully to commit a crime

Burma

Use Myanmar. In copy, refer to Myanmar, formerly known as Burma.

Burmese names

Despite the rule about dropping honorifics, keep the full name at second reference. U means Mr and Daw means Mrs. When U is followed by a single name it should be retained, e.g. U Nu.

burnt, or burned in American style

burqa

Not burka. A one-piece head-to-toe covering for Muslim women, with a headband to hold it in place and a cloth mesh to cover the face but allow vision. Most frequent in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some European languages use burqa for other kinds of covering, but avoid this usage.

bus, buses, busing

Passenger bus is tautologous.

bushel

A unit of measure of dry goods, such as corn, wheat or soybeans equal to 32 dry quarts or 4 pecks or 35.2 litres in metric measurement.

but

Avoid where possible, particularly in leads.It is imprecise, overused and can imply bias if it comes between differing versions of events (e.g. He said this, but she said that). In such cases a full stop and a new sentence is better. Do not start a sentence with but.

by

As a prefix needs no hyphen, except in by-election, by-law, by-product.

Byelorussia

Use Belarus.

Byzantine

Capitalise.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 07:47, 21 January 2011.

C

Contents

- 1 Cabinet
- 2 cactus, cactuses
- 3 caddy
- 4 Caesarean section
- 5 cafe
- 6 caffeine
- 7 calibre, but American style is caliber
- 8 Calcutta
- 9 call up, call-up
- 10 camaraderie
- 11 Cambodia
- 12 Cameroon
- 13 Camilla Parker Bowles
- 14 can
- 15 Canada goose
- 16 cancer
- 17 cancel, cancelled, cancellation
- 18 cannon, canon
- 19 canvas, canvass
- 20 capable, capability
- 21 capital, capitol
- 22 capital account
- 23 capital-raising
- 24 Capitalisation. American style is capitalization
- 25 capsize
- 26 carat, caret
- 27 carcass
- 28 careen, career
- 29 cargo and cargoes
- 30 carrier
- 31 carry out
- 32 casino
- 33 castor
- 34 catalogue, catalogued, catalogue, cataloguing, but in American style catalog, cataloged, cataloger, cataloging
- 35 Catch-22
- 36 cave in, cave-in
- 37 caution
- 38 Cawnpore
- 39 CD-ROM
- 40 ceasefire, ceasefires
- 41 celebrant, celebrator
- 42 celibacy, chastity
- 43 cellphone
- 44 cement, concrete
- 45 cemetery

- 46 cello, cellos
- 47 censer, censor, censure
- 48 centre, but center in American style
- 49 Centigrade
- 50 cents
- 51 centimetre
- 52 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- 53 centre on
- 54 centuries
- 55 CEO
- 56 Ceylon
- 57 chairman, chairwoman
- 58 Champions League
- 59 changeable
- 60 channel and channelled
- 61 charisma
- 62 chat room
- 63 chat show
- 64 cheap, low
- 65 check, cheque, chequebook
- 66 Chennai
- 67 chequered flag, but American style is checkered flag
- 68 cherry pick
- 69 child criminals
- 70 children's
- 71 Chinese names
- 72 chips
- 73 Christ
- 74 Christie's
- 75 chronic
- 76 Church of Christ, Scientist
- 77 Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints
- 78 CIA
- 79 circle, centre
- 80 city-state
- 81 civil society
- 82 claimed
- 83 clamour, clamouring, clamorous, but American style is clamor, clamoring, clamorous
- 84 claycourt
- 85 clean up
- 86 clear-cut
- 87 cliches
- 88 click here
- 89 climb up
- 90 close proximity
- 91 coastguard
- 92 coastline
- 93 confectionery
- 94 cognoscente
- 95 Cold War

- 96 collapsible
- 97 collectibles
- 98 collective nouns
- 99 collision
- 100 colloquial contractions
- 101 collusion, collaboration
- 102 Colombia, Columbia
- 103 colour, but American style color
- 104 coloured
- 105 combat, but combated is the American usage as a verb.
- 106 comedian
- 107 commander-in-chief, but in American style commander in chief
- 108 commando, commandos
- 109 commas
- 110 commence
- 111 comment
- 112 commercial paper
- 113 commit
- 114 committee
- 115 communique
- 116 communist
- 117 Comoro Islands
- 118 company names
    - ♦ 118.1 AB
    - ♦ 118.2 AG
    - ♦ 118.3 A/S
    - ♦ 118.4 Cie
    - ♦ 118.5 Co
    - ♦ 118.6 Cos
    - ♦ 118.7 Corp
    - ♦ 118.8 GmbH
    - ♦ 118.9 Inc
    - ♦ 118.10 KK
    - ♦ 118.11 Ltd
    - ♦ 118.12 Plc
    - ♦ 118.13 Pty
    - ♦ 118.14 SpA
    - ♦ 118.15 YK
- 119 company titles
- 120 compare
- 121 comparisons
- 122 comparatively
- 123 compass points
- 124 compatible
- 125 compatriot
- 126 complacent, complaisant
- 127 complement, compliment
- 128 comprise
- 129 compound
- 130 compound adjectives

- 131 compunction
- 132 concerning
- 133 confectionery
- 134 confidant (male), confidante (female)
- 135 confrontation
- 136 Congo
- 137 Congress, congressional
- 138 connote, denote
- 139 -conscious
- 140 consensus
- 141 consequence
- 142 conservative
- 143 considerable
- 144 consortium, consortiums, not consortia.
- 145 consul-general
- 146 consult, not consult with.
- 147 consumer price index
- 148 contagious, not contageous.
- 149 contango
- 150 contemptible, contemptuous
- 151 continue
- 152 continual, continuous
- 153 contractions
- 154 contrast
- 155 control, controlled, controlling
- 156 controversial
- 157 conurbation
- 158 convener
- 159 conversions
- 160 conversions in sports writing
- 161 conveyor
- 162 convince, persuade
- 163 cooperate, cooperation
- 164 coordinate, coordination
- 165 copter
- 166 co-respondent, correspondent
- 167 corporate America
- 168 council, councillor
- 169 Court of St. James’s
- 170 court-martial
- 171 courtesy titles
- 172 cover up, coverup
- 173 CPI
- 174 Cracow
- 175 credible, credulous, creditworthy
- 176 credit rating
- 177 crescendo
- 178 Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease
- 179 cripple, crippled
- 180 crisis, crises

- 181 crisscross
- 182 criterion, plural criteria.
- 183 crop year
- 184 cross country
- 185 cross-examine, cross-examined
- 186 cross fire
- 187 cross section
- 188 crown currency
- 189 crowd estimates
- 190 crucial
- 191 cruise missile
- 192 crunch
- 193 cupful, cupfuls
- 194 current account
- 195 currently
- 196 curriculum vitae
- 197 cutback
- 198 cut off, cutoff
- 199 czar
- 200 Czech Republic

Cabinet

Capitalise when referring to a grouping of senior government ministers, heads of department or presidential advisers.

cactus, cactuses

caddy

Not caddie

Caesarean section

cafe

No accent.

caffeine

calibre, but American style is caliber

Calcutta

Use Kolkata

call up, call-up

Two words for the verb, one for the noun and adjective.

camaraderie

Cambodia

Use this official name rather than the Khmer-Rouge-era Kampuchea unless directly quoting. Full names should be used at all references except in the case of royalty.

Cameroon

Not Cameroun or the Cameroons, West Africa.

Camilla Parker Bowles

No hyphen.

can

May is about asking permission and can is about the ability to act. If we may borrow your car we can drive to the beach. May can also be about uncertainty. War may start tomorrow, or may not. War can start tomorrow because all the weapons are in place.

Canada goose

Not Canadian.

cancer

See medical stories on the need for caution in handling stories about reputed cures for cancer.

cancel, cancelled, cancellation

Events that are called off but will be held later are postponed. Report the new date if possible. Only those events scrapped completely are cancelled. American style uses cancel,canceled, canceling but cancellation.

cannon, canon

A cannon is a weapon (same singular and plural), a canon is a law or church dignitary.

canvas, canvass

Paint on canvas but canvass for votes.

capable, capability

Use with restraint. Write that an aircraft can carry 300 passengers not The aircraft is capable of carrying 300 passengers. The United States can launch... not The United States has the capability to launch.

capital, capitol

Capital for all uses, apart from capitol for the building where Congress or state legislatures meet, usually capitalised. Capitalisation

capital account

An account in the balance of payments that records movements of capital between domestic and foreign residents. The capital account records changes in the asset and liability position of domestic residents. It covers flows such as loans and investments. See also current account, balance of payments.

capital-raising

Hyphenated.

Capitalisation. American style is capitalization

Putting the first letter of a word in capitals makes it limited and specific, e.g. He was a Communist with conservative instincts.

Abbreviations normally follow the capitalisation of the unabbreviated form. e.g. North American Treaty Organisation, NATO, miles per hour, mph, Western European Union, WEU. See also abbreviations.

Academic, aristocratic, corporate, official, military and religious titles: Capitalise when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Professor John Smith, Admiral Horatio Nelson but the history professor, the admiral. Capitalise titles such as Ruritanian President Tamsin Noble or Global Corp. Chief Executive Jane Dimitriou. See also aristocratic titles and nobility.

Acronyms are words formed from the initial letters or syllables of other words, e.g. radar – radio detection and ranging. When an acronym is made up of initial letters that are themselves capitalised, then capitalise each letter, e.g. NATO for the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation. But if the acronym is formed from initial syllables rather than letters, then capitalise only the first letter. In general avoid acronyms as much as possible.

Armed forces: capitalise such specific names as U.S. Marine Corps, Royal Air Force, the Canadian Forces and the (German) Bundeswehr and Luftwaffe. Use lower case when referring generically to the various armed services in cases where nations do not use the word as a proper noun e.g. the French army, the Indonesian navy, the Brazilian air force.

Astronomical: Capitalise the names of heavenly bodies such as Betelgeuse, the Great Bear and Jupiter, but not the sun, moon, and earth (except in a phrase such as Mother Earth or Planet Earth or when listing Earth among the planets).

Drugs: Capitalise Ecstasy and the names of other synthetic drugs.

Geographical and geological names: Capitalise these, apart from particles, articles, and compass references not forming part of the proper name, e.g. the River Plate but the river; North Korea but north London; the Nile Delta but the delta of the Nile, the Upper Pleistocene, the Lower East Side of New York but the lower east bank of the river. However, the Bermuda Triangle, the Triangle.

Geopolitical: capitalise nouns and adjectives with a geographic origin but used politically, such as Western influence, the North-South divide, the West, Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia.

Government ministers: Capitalise the title when it immediately precedes the person’s name. When the title follows the name or is used alone, use lower case, e.g.: French Foreign Minister Jean Blanc; Jean Blanc, the French foreign minister, the foreign minister, President George Bush but The president said: “I would like to welcome the Manchukistan prime minister, Stefan Hartzjand.”

Government bodies: treat government bodies as proper names and capitalise them when they are an integral part of a specific name but not when unspecific as in plurals or standing alone, e.g. the Israeli Foreign Ministry or the Foreign Ministry said Israel would... But The ministry added; the Australian Parliament but the Australian and New Zealand parliaments.

Hyphenated titles: When a hyphenated title is capitalised, capitalise both parts, e.g. Lieutenant-General John Smith, Vice-Admiral Tom Brown, Secretary-General Juan Blanco.

Legislative bodies: Capitalise the official names of legislatives bodies such as Parliament, Senate, the Diet at all references. The one exception is when they are used in the plural: The Norwegian and Danish parliaments.

Nationality and race: Capitalise words denominating nationality race or language -- Arab, African, Argentine, Caucasian, Chinese, Finnish.

Nicknames: Treat them as proper names when they refer to a specific person or thing, e.g. the Iron Lady; Silvio Berlusconi, nicknamed “Cavaliere “ (Knight); the Australian rugby team, the Wallabies.

Occupations: Do not capitalise words that informally describe a person’s occupation e.g. farmer Jack Thomas, accountant William Smith.

Politics: Capitalise the names of political parties and of movements with a specific doctrine, e.g. a Communist official, a Democratic senator. Use lower case for non-specific references, e.g. The communist part of the former Soviet Bloc, but the Communist Party of what was then East Germany; the settlement was run on communist principles; he proposed a democratic vote.

Proper names: Common nouns that normally have no initial capital are capitalised when they are an integral part of the full name of a person, organisation or thing, e.g. Queen Elizabeth, the Sultan of Brunei, President Hosni Mubarak, General John Smith, Senator Jack Brown, the River Thames, Christian Democratic Party, the Church Assembly. These nouns are normally lower case if they stand alone or in the plural e.g. the queen, the Malaysian sultan, down the river, Christian Democratic parties. But former Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew, former Managing Director John Brown. Do not risk ambiguity, e.g. The Speaker told the House of Commons. Retain the capital also when the person remains specific because there is only one or because he or she is preeminent, e.g. the Dalai Lama, the Pontiff, the Pope, the Virgin Mary.

Proper nouns: Capitalise words that uniquely identify a particular person or thing, e.g. John Smith, General Motors, Mount Everest, the Sixteenth Century as a noun but 16th-century art, the 1st Infantry Division, the 7th Fleet. Exceptions here are for articles and particles used as auxiliaries in names like Robert the Bruce, Charles de Gaulle. Keep the capital on words that still derive their meaning from a proper noun, e.g. Americanise, Christian, Marxist, Shakespearian, Stalinist. Do not keep it when the connection with the proper noun is remote, e.g. arabic numerals, boycott, chauvinistic, french polish, herculean, pasteurise.

Publications: No quotation marks around the title. Whatever the masthead says, do not capitalise articles and particles in the names of English-language newspapers and magazines, e.g. the New York Times, the News of the World. The names of some non-English language newspapers begin with a word meaning the. In such cases write the newspaper O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt not the O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt newspaper

Books, films, plays, poems, operas, songs and works of art: capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. “The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich”, “The Merchant of Venice”, “Gone with the Wind”. The same is true of radio and television programmes other than news and current affairs, e.g. “American Idol” but Meet the Press.

Quotes: A statement that follows a colon quote begins with a capital, e.g. Guzhenko said: “The conference has ignored the principle of equality.”

Religion: Names of divinities are capitalised but unspecific plurals are lower case, e.g. Allah, the Almighty, Christ, God, Jehovah, the Deity, the Holy Trinity, but the gods, the lords of the universe. Capitalise religious titles when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Bishop Thaddeus Smith, Dean Robert Jones, but the bishop, the dean. Use only the simplest and best-known titles at first reference, e.g. the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr John Smith rather

than the Right Rev. John Smith. Capitalise names of denominations and religious movements, e.g. Baptist, Buddhist, Christian, Church of England, Islamic, Jew, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox. But non-denominational references are lower case, e.g. adult baptism, orthodox beliefs, built a temple. The pope is head of the Roman Catholic Church or of the Church (that is, the whole body of Roman Catholics) but he would celebrate mass in a Roman Catholic church (that is, a building). A baptist is someone who baptises. A Baptist is a member of the Protestant denomination. With more than 20 separate Baptist church groups in the United States, it is incorrect to refer to the Baptist Church as a singular entity. The correct reference would be to Baptist Churches or to the specific Baptist group involved, e.g. the Southern Baptist Convention. See religious terms

Sentences: The first word of a sentence is always capitalised, unless it is contained within brackets as part of another sentence (this is an example). Sports: Treat specific events as proper names, general references as common nouns, e.g. the Olympic Games, the Belgian Grand Prix, but an athletics meeting, a motor racing championship.

Software: Capitalise, without quotation marks, e.g. Windows, Internet Explorer. Use quotation marks for computer games, e.g. “Bust a Move: Dance Summit”.

Sports events: Use lower case for sport names, junior, men’s, women’s, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for title of the event e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament.

Transport: Names of aircraft, cars, railway trains and ships, are capitalised, e.g. the Cutty Sark, USS Forrestal, a Nimrod, a Ford Mondea, the Orient Express.

capsize

carat, caret

Carat is a measurement of weight in precious stones and of purity in gold. Caret is a proofreader’s mark to show an insertion of something missing. In American style, karat is the measurement of gold purity.

carcass

careen, career

You careen a ship by turning it on its side to clean the hull. It can be used to mean keeling over. To career is to move rapidly.

cargo and cargoes

carrier

Use only in reference to aircraft carriers, i.e. ships from which fixed-wing aircraft can take off. Helicopter carriers should be referred to by the full name.

carry out

A weak synonym for do. Use a stronger verb to describe the action.

casino

casinos.

castor

For all uses – the wheel on a furniture leg, a beaver, bean or oil. in American style, caster is a wheel on a furniture leg but castor is a beaver or a bean or oil.

catalogue, catalogued, catalogue, cataloguing, but in American style catalog, cataloged, cataloger, cataloging

Catch-22

Capitalised and hyphenated. An absurd no-win situation. From the title of the Joseph Heller novel. Now a cliche; use with restraint.

cave in, cave-in

Two words for verb. One word for noun.

caution

As a verb prefer warn. Do not write, for instance, He cautioned that war was imminent.

Cawnpore

Use Kanpur, India.

CD-ROM

ceasefire, ceasefires

One word as a noun. The verb is to cease fire.

celebrant, celebrator

A celebrant takes part in a religious ceremony and a celebrator takes part in a revel.

celibacy, chastity

Celibacy is unmarried, particularly under the force of a vow. Chastity is sexual purity or virginity. You can be chaste but not celibate, and celibate but not chaste.

cellphone

One word.

cement, concrete

Cement is just one constituent of concrete. Use concrete block, not cement block.

cemetery

cello, cellos

censer, censor, censure

A censer is used to burn incense. A censor removes offensive content . Censure is disapproval.

centre, but center in American style

Watch for use in proper names.

Centigrade

Use Celsius.

cents

Spell out U.S. cents in text.

centimetre

Abbreviation cm (no full stop, same singular and plural), acceptable at all references. To convert to inches roughly multiply by two and divide by five, precisely multiply by 0.394.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

U.S. Public Health Service national agencies based in Atlanta. Note the plural. Not Centres.

centre on

You centre on something, not around it. You circle around something.

centuries

Spell out numbers one to nine, write 10 and above in figures -- ninth century, 20th century (no capital letter)

CEO

Use chief executive officer on first reference.

Ceylon

Use Sri Lanka.

chairman, chairwoman

not chair or chairperson.

Champions League

Capitalised and no apostrophe.

changeable

channel and channelled

charisma

A tired and worn out word. Avoid. Very few people have a divinely conferred gift or influence over large numbers of people.

chat room

Two words.

chat show

Two words, no hyphen.

cheap, low

Prices are low not cheap.

check, cheque, chequebook

A restaurant bill is a check, a money order a cheque. In American style, check is used for both.

Chennai

Not Madras.

chequered flag, but American style is checkered flag

cherry pick

To select carefully. A clichÃ©.

child criminals

In many countries it is illegal to identify a defendant under the age of 18. Use sensitivity and be guided by local legal rules.

children’s

The possessive is children’s, similar to men’s and women’s.

Chinese names

Use the Pinyin transliteration of Chinese names from China. Thus Guangdong (not Canton), Beijing (not Peking), Mao Zedong (not Mao Tsetung), Zhou Enlai (not Chou Enlai) However, where there are traditional alternatives that are not Chinese e.g., Kashgar, Khotan, Tibet (and its cities of Lhasa and Shigatse), Urumqi, use these. Mainland Chinese do not hyphenate the given name, e.g. Deng Xiaoping. Taiwan Chinese do, with the second part in lower case, e.g. Chiang Kai-shek. In both cases use only the surname at second reference, e.g. Deng, Chiang.

chips

Use french fries – unambiguous and universally understood (except for fish and chips).

Christ

Write Jesus Christ or Jesus on first reference and usually Jesus thereafter. Use Christ on second reference only in the context of Christian theology, i.e. in phrases such as "body and blood of Christ" that are clearly taken from Christian beliefs. See Jesus Christ

Christie’s

With an apostrophe.

chronic

Acute is coming to a crisis, chronic is lasting a long time or deep-seated. Be specific when writing about disease or problems.

Church of Christ, Scientist

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

Use Mormon Church unless the story is specifically about the Church’s affairs.

CIA

The United States Central Intelligence Agency. The initials may be used alone as an adjective in a lead paragraph if it is clear from the context what is meant.

circle, centre

You circle around something but centre on something.

city-state

hyphenated

civil society

A vague term, not interchangeable with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) The OECD defines it thus: "The multitude of associations around which society voluntarily organizes itself and which represent a wide range of interests and ties. These can include community-based organisations, indigenous peoples' organisations and non-government organisations."

claimed

Use of this word suggests the writer does not believe the statement in question. Prefer plain said. It is acceptable to say that a guerrilla organisation claimed responsibility for carrying out an attack. Do not say that it claimed credit.

clamour, clamouring, clamorous, but American style is clamor, clamoring, clamorous

claycourt

one word as an adjective, e.g. claycourt tournament, but two words as an adjective and noun, e.g. clay courts at the stadium.

clean up

The verb is clean up, the noun and adjective cleanup.

clear-cut

Adjective.

cliches

Avoid metaphors, similes, or other figures of speech that appear frequently in print. If it sounds too familiar then discard it.

In diplomacy and politics: face-to-face talks, on key issues, top-level meeting, headed into talks on, spearheaded a major initiative, rubber-stamp parliament, lashed out, landmark agreement.

In disasters: mercy mission, airlifted/rushed to hospital, giant C-130 transports, massive aid, an air and sea search was under way, disaster probe, sifted through the wreckage.

Of violence: lone gunman, strife-torn province, embattled city, baton-wielding police, stone-throwing demonstrators, steel-helmeted troops braced themselves for, police swoop, pre-dawn raid, staged an attack on, (tautologically) anti-government rebels, (tautologically) armed soldiers. Avoid armed police unless writing about a country where the police are normally unarmed. Then explain.

Of industrial trouble: top union leaders, bosses, in a bid to settle, hammer out an agreement.

click here

Do not use on websites. Tell readers where they are going.

climb up

In almost all cases just climb will do.

close proximity

Replace with close to or near.

coastguard

One word except when referring to the U.S. Coast Guard.

coastline

One word.

confectionery

Collective noun meaning sweetmeats, candy. Confectionary is one sweetmeat.

cognoscente

singular. Plural is cognoscenti. Prefer connoisseur and connoisseurs. They possess not just knowledge, but critical knowledge of a subject.

Cold War

Capitalise.

collapsible

collectibles

collective nouns

Most collective nouns and names of countries, governments, organisations and companies are followed by singular verbs and singular neuter pronouns, e.g. The government, which is studying the problem said it... not The government, who are studying the problem, said they.. Exceptions are the police (police are), the couple (the couple are) and Reuters sports stories, where teams take plural verbs and pronouns.

collision

Beware of the legal danger of imputing blame in a collision but avoid clumsy phraseology such as The Danish freighter was in collision with the German tanker. Better to write The Danish freighter and the German tanker collided. Only two moving objects can collide. It is wrong therefore to write The ferry collided with the jetty. Plain hit is enough.

colloquial contractions

Use contractions such as isn’t, aren’t, can’t only in quotes or an informal context. Do not write President Brown can’t make up his mind whether to raise taxes or cut government spending. But

you could write For Georgia peanut farmer Fred Jenkins it isn't a question of whether, but when, he will go bankrupt. Use ain't only when quoting someone.

collusion, collaboration

Collusion is to act together to deceive. Do not use it when you mean collaboration or cooperation.

Colombia, Columbia

Colombia is the country, but Columbia Records.

colour, but American style color

There is no conflict between the need for impartiality and concise writing and the need in many stories for colour, description and atmosphere. Correspondents filing witness reports should think visual and write copy that reflects that they have been on the scene of an event rather than picked up the information at second hand. If writing a story from the office they should not hesitate to take descriptive from television ensuring that they distinguish clearly between what television shows (which need not be sourced if the facts are indisputable) and what a television commentator says.

The first person should not normally intrude into Reuters copy. If you have to source a contentious statement based on direct observation write … This correspondent saw… Vivid quotes and lively background details breathe life into a dry story and should be woven in, not inserted in slabs. Colourful stories do not need gaudy adjectives or overdramatic verbs. They require a fresh vision, selection of the right noun to convey a shade of meaning, and vigorous, active verbs.

coloured

Use for people only in the context of South Africa for a person of mixed race. The story should make this clear. Lower case. See section on race

combat, but combated is the American usage as a verb.

comedian

Use for a man or a woman. Not comedienne.

commander-in-chief, but in American style commander in chief

There are no hyphens in U.S. titles.

commando, commandos

commas

Any sentence studded with commas could probably benefit from a rewrite. Use commas as a guide to sense, to break a sentence into logically discrete parts, but do not use them to the extent that they break the flow of a sentence.

Use commas to mark off words and phrases that are in apposition to, or define other words or phrases in the sentence e.g. Herve de Charette, French foreign minister, said ... Rudolf Nureyev, most prominent of the defectors from the Bolshoi, has danced …

Use commas to mark off a clause that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence, e.g. The airliner, which was seven years old, crashed ... But a clause that cannot be removed from the sentence without affecting its meaning is not marked off by commas, e.g. The airliner that crashed on Thursday was seven years old but the plane lost the previous day was brand new.

Use commas to separate items in a list, e.g. cheese, fruit, wine and coffee or Smith despised ballet, hated the theatre and was bored by opera. Note that there is normally no comma before the final and. However, a comma should be used in this position if to leave it out would risk ambiguity, e.g. He admired Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hart, and Leonard Bernstein.

As in the sentence above, a comma follows an initial however. But as long as there is no risk of ambiguity there is no need for the comma after opening phrases like On Wednesday the committee decided ... In the first four months of 2002 Britain exported ...

commence

Use begin or start.

comment

Journalists should not comment but interpret events by reporting the action of others.

commercial paper

A short-term debt issued by companies for working capital, typically with 90 days duration

commit

Past tense committed, noun commitment.

committee

communique

A communique is an official announcement. It is tautological to write an official communique. Plain statement is usually better.

communist

Lower case except when referring to a specific party e.g. Communist Party of Great Britain.

Comoro Islands

Or simply the Comoros for the Indian Ocean group.

company names

When writing about a company, provide the full legal company name (including Inc, Ltd, Plc etc) at first reference. Where this would be clumsy, e.g. if several companies are named together in a lead paragraph, the full legal name can be given at second reference. Give the name in its original language if that language uses Latin characters unless the company has a preference for its English name.

Many companies in the same group have similar names. It is only by giving the full names that a specialist can distinguish between them. When giving the company's full name observe the spelling, capitalisation and punctuation used by the company, apostrophes, hyphens and slashes (e.g. A/S), but use standard abbreviations to indicate what type of company. Don't use a point (full stop) after the abbreviation eg. Inc not Inc. and Ltd not Ltd. Use the name that the company itself uses. The exception is companies that render their names all in capitals, in which case we make it upper/lower (CIGNA Corp becomes Cigna Corp).

Eliminate exclamation points from company names, such as Yahoo! and Yum!.

Keep lower case in company names except at the start of a sentence, where eBay becomes Ebay.

Do not use the colloquial practice of pluralising company names. It is Ford not Fords; Rothschild not Rothschilds. Similarly do not pluralise the pronouns. Companies are singular, not plural. It is Siemens said its plant... not ...their plant...

The following abbreviations show the kind of registered company. When such abbreviations come at the end of a company name they are not preceded by a comma.

AB

Aktiebolaget

AG

Aktiengesellschaft

A/S

Aktieselskabet

Cie

Compagnie

Co

Company

Cos

Companies

Corp

Corporation

GmbH

Gesellschaft mit beschaenkter Haftung

Inc

Incorporated

KK

Kabushiki Kaisha (joint stock company)

Ltd

Limited

Plc

Public limited company

Pty

Proprietary

SpA

Societa per Azioni

YK

Yugen Kaisha (Ltd.)

company titles

Capitalise corporate titles, e.g. Company Chairman John Smith, not Company chairman John Smith.

compare

When in doubt use compare with, which is used for a comparison to highlight either differences or similarities. Compare to is used when simply stating that two things are similar, e.g. His playing compares to that of Mozart. See contrast.

comparisons

Compare like with like. It is wrong to write The food shortage was not as bad as near-famine years or the weapon's range was twice as great as the Kalashnikov. You cannot compare a shortage with years or a distance with a weapon. Write The food shortage was not so bad as that in the near-famine years or The weapon's range was twice as great as the Kalashnikov's. Special care is needed with statistical comparisons. One month may not be comparable with another because of its length or the number of national holidays it contains. December figures for one country may not be comparable with another's because the countries are in different hemispheres.

comparatively

Only use the word if you are actually comparing something with another thing. Even in those cases you can leave it out and directly say something is bigger than, or smaller than. Do not use comparatively small to

compass points

Capitalise compass points only when they form part of a proper name – North Korea, but north London; the Lower East Side of New York, but the lower east bank of the river. Omit hyphens in the four basic compounds northwest, northeast, southwest, southeast. Use a hyphen in the minor compounds such as north-northeast. You do not write northern Connecticut or southern Kent when you mean to say that Connecticut is a northern state or Kent a southern county. So do not say northern Chiang Mai or eastern Kivu province. It's the northern town of Chiang Mai or the eastern province of Kivu.

compatible

compatriot

But expatriate, not expatriot.

complacent, complaisant

Complacent is smug and self-satisfied. Complaisant is willing and affable.

complement, compliment

To complement is to complete or to provide a matching component to something, e.g. The British submarines complemented the U.S. surface ships. To compliment is to praise.

comprise

Use only when listing all the component parts of a whole: Benelux comprises Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Do not write comprised of. If listing only some components use include: The European Union includes Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

compound

If you mean to make worse, say so.

compound adjectives

Require hyphens, e.g. the first-leg score. If an adverb and an adjective are used together in an adjectival phrase then there is no hyphen e.g. a closely followed competition.

compunction

Use pity or remorse in preference. Do not confuse with compulsion.

concerning

Prefer about.

confectionery

confidant (male), confidante (female)

confrontation

Modish but vague word. Use more specific terms if possible, e.g. war, clash, dispute.

Congo

Distinguish between the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), formerly Zaire, and the neighbouring Congo Republic. In most stories, only one Congo is involved so subsequent references can be made simply to Congo or Congolese. In stories about the Democratic Republic of Congo, the acronym DRC may be used in brackets at first mention, and stand alone at later references.

Congress, congressional

Capitalise Congress when it is part of the name of an official body. Keep congressional lower case unless it is part of the formal title of an official body.

connote, denote

Connote is to imply attributes. Marriage connotes short-term bliss. Denote is to indicate or mark by a sign. A wedding ring denoted his married status. Both words are probably best avoided.

-conscious

Hyphenated as in self-conscious, but unconsciousness

consensus

General consensus is tautological, as is consensus of opinion because consensus means either unanimity or a general trend of opinion.

consequence

Use because rather than as a consequence of.

conservative

Lower case unless referring to a specific political organisation.

considerable

Avoid. Define by size; show the reader why something in considerable.

consortium, consortiums, not consortia.

consul-general

Note hyphen. Likewise consulate-general.

consult, not consult with.

consumer price index

The CPI is a measure of retail price inflation. Also known as a retail price index. Usually given as percentage rise or fall in the index.

contagious, not contageous.

contango

A state of affairs where futures prices are progressively higher the further the maturity date is from spot. Contango is the normal relationship between spot and futures prices and is the opposite of backwardation. See Also backwardation.

contemptible, contemptuous

Contemptible is despicable and contemptuous is haughty or scornful. The contemptuous scorn the contemptible.

continue

Avoid in lead paragraphs. There is always more lively phrasing available.

continual, continuous

Continual means frequent and repeated, continuous means uninterrupted.

contractions

Avoid contractions such as isn’t, won’t, wasn’t, can’t except in direct quotations. Spell out the phrase in full, is not, will not etc.

contrast

Use contrast to for comparisons of dissimilar things, or to underline the difference. His scowl contrasted to her smile. Use contrast with when you want to compare the differences of two similar things. He contrasted the performance of the England cricket team with that of Australia. See compare.

control, controlled, controlling

controversial

Avoid. Spell out what is controversial and let the reader decide.

conurbation

Not a synonym for an urban area. It means an aggregation of towns, like the New York-Boston or Tokyo-Osaka corridors.

convener

conversions

Convert currencies into U.S. dollars and turn imperial weights and measures into metric equivalents and vice versa. Give the local unit in the country of origin first and then the conversion in brackets. Never give the dollar equivalent without first giving the local currency figure. If a figure for speed, distance, weight, etc., is approximate, the conversion should also be approximate. Write a 2,000-lb (900-kg) bomb not a 2,000-lb (907-kg) bomb. Do not give a conversion to more decimal places than are given in the original figure. When abbreviating metric units use the singular form without a full stop, e.g. kg or km not kgs or kms. If no specific figure is being given, do not go through the motions of converting. Write, for instance, The bomb exploded only yards from the palace entrance not The bomb exploded only yards (metres) from the palace entrance. Conversions are a fertile source of error. Double-check them all. If you make a conversion precisely using a calculator, make a rough backward check to make sure that you have not added or lost a zero.

conversions in sports writing

Use only metric measurements, except for golf where yards and feet are used, and sailing where nautical miles are used. In sports writing there is no need to add conversions in brackets, apart from currencies.

conveyor

Use for conveyor belt and for a person who conveys.

convince, persuade

You convince people of something and persuade them to do something. You do not convince someone to do something.

cooperate, cooperation

An exception to the rule that prefixes are usually hyphenated when the same vowel ends the prefix and starts the main word. But co-op (stores) to distinguish from chicken coop.

coordinate, coordination

An exception to the prefix hyphenation rules.

copter

Use helicopter.

co-respondent, correspondent

A co-respondent appears in a divorce case. A correspondent writes letters.

corporate America

Not Corporate America.

council, councillor

Not councilor, councilman, councilwoman, but American style is counsel, counseling, counselor.

Court of St. James’s

The place to which ambassadors are posted in Great Britain. It is St. not St and James’s not James Palace.

court-martial

courts-martial, to court-martial

courtesy titles

Do not use courtesy titles such as Mr, Mrs, Ms or Miss or their foreign equivalents. An exception would be in a story about two people with the same family name when we might refer for instance to Mr Smith and Mrs Smith to avoid confusion. Use at first reference only titles of nobility and military, medical and religious titles, e.g. Lord Ferrars, Dr Christiaan Barnard, the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Except for obvious cases e.g. a king or queen, avoid foreign honorifics; it is difficult to be consistent through various cultures. In general it is better to describe people by their job title or position.

cover up, coverup

Two words for verb, one word for noun.

CPI

Consumer price index. The CPI is a measure of retail price inflation. Also known as a retail price index. Usually given as percentage rise or fall in the index. In the UK, the main domestic measure of inflation for macroeconomic purposes and equal to HICP.

Cracow

Use Krakow, Poland.

credible, credulous, creditworthy

If you are credible you can be believed. If you are credulous you will believe anything. If you are creditworthy you are likely to get a loan.

credit rating

Credit ratings measure a borrower's creditworthiness and provide an international framework for comparing the credit quality of issuers and rated debt securities. Rating provided by agencies including Moody’s and Standard and Poor’s and Fitch.

Use the exact combination of letters, upper and lower case and/or numbers that each of the rating agencies use and use the word "plus" or "minus" spelt out in full instead of the "+" or "-" signs to avoid typos and alpha-numeric problems with some keyboards.

For example, Standard & Poors uses AAA, AA+, and AA-. In Reuters style these would be written AAA, AA-plus or AA-minus. Moody's uses Aaa, Aa1, Aa3. In Reuters style these would be written Aaa, Aa1 or Aa3. Fitch uses 'AAA', 'AA+', 'AA-' . In Reuters style these would be written AAA, AA-plus or AA-minus.

See

www.moodys.com

www2.standardandpoors.com

www.fitchratings.com

crescendo

A gradual increase in loudness. It is wrong to write that something reached a crescendo, which is a probable confusion with reached a climax.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease

Can be abbreviated to CJD, but needs explanation. There is also variant CJD. Abbreviate to vCJD.

cripple, crippled

Avoid using to describe the handicapped.

crisis, crises

Try to avoid. It means a turning point or the stage in events at which the trend of all future events is determined. Very overused. A crisis cannot grow or deepen. It just is.

crisscross

One word.

criterion, plural criteria.

crop year

Take care with crop-year dates because the old crop can be harvested and the new crop planted in the same year. To refer to the 2002 crop can be ambiguous. Commodity producers sometimes have marketing years for produce which differ from the crop year. In such cases spell out which year is referred to and when each starts and ends.

cross country

Two words, no hyphen, for the athletics event.

cross-examine, cross-examined

Hyphenated.

cross fire

Two words.

cross section

Two words.

crown currency

Use this for the Nordic currencies, not kroner, kronor or kronur.

crowd estimates

If the number of people involved in an event such as a demonstration or strike is at all controversial, give the source for the number quoted.

crucial

A clichÃ© best avoided. Try instead to show the reader why something is crucial and to whom.

cruise missile

Lower case.

crunch

A tired clichÃ©. Avoid.

cupful, cupfuls

current account

A country's current account balance is the sum of the visible trade balance (exports and imports that can be seen) and the invisible balance (credits and debits for services of one kind or another, such as tourism, banking and insurance). It excludes flows produced by long-term borrowings or investment, which are counted in the capital account. See also balance of payments.

currently

Unless comparing the present with the past, the word is usually redundant, as in The United States currently has 20,000 troops in Ruritania. Cut it out.

curriculum vitae

Singular. Plural is curricula vitae

cutback

Use cut for both verb and noun.

cut off, cutoff

The verb is cut off, the noun is cutoff.

czar

Use tsar.

Czech Republic

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 10:10, 23 May 2011.

D

Contents

- 1 dachshund
- 2 Daimler-Benz
- 3 dais, lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum
- 4 Dalai Lama
- 5 dashes
- 6 data
- 7 database
- 8 dates
- 9 daughter-in-law, daughters-in-law
- 10 daylight-saving time
- 11 days of the week
- 12 day to day
- 13 D-Day
- 14 DEA
- 15 deaf
- 16 deathbed
- 17 death toll
- 18 decades
- 19 decided, decisive
- 20 decimals
- 21 decimate
- 22 defeat
- 23 defence, but American style is defense
- 24 defendant
- 25 definite, definitive
- 26 definitely
- 27 defunct
- 28 defuse, diffuse
- 29 degree-day
- 30 deletion
- 31 delight
- 32 demagogue
- 33 demise
- 34 demolished, destroyed
- 35 demonstrator
- 36 denials
- 37 denote, connote
- 38 dependant, dependent
- 39 deprecate
- 40 depreciation
- 41 depression
- 42 depths
- 43 deputy
- 44 de rigueur
- 45 desiccate
- 46 designate

- 47 despatch
- 48 desperate
- 49 despite the fact that
- 50 detente
- 51 devaluation
- 52 device, devise
- 53 dexterous
- 54 diagnosis, prognosis
- 55 diarrhoea, but diarrhea in American style
- 56 dictator
- 57 dictionary
- 58 die-hard
- 59 dietitian
- 60 differ from, differ with
- 61 different
- 62 from, different to
- 63 diffuse, defuse
- 64 dike
- 65 dilapidated
- 66 dilemma
- 67 diphtheria
- 68 disabled people
- 69 disassemble, dissemble
- 70 disassociate
- 71 disaster
- 72 disc, disk
- 73 discernible
- 74 discomfit, discomfort
- 75 discount rate
- 76 discover
- 77 discreet, discrete
- 78 discriminatory language
- 79 diseases
- 80 disinterested, uninterested
- 81 disorientate
- 82 dispatch
- 83 dispel
- 84 dispensable
- 85 disposal, disposition
- 86 distances
- 87 distinct, distinctive
- 88 district attorney
- 89 DJIA or the Dow
- 90 dive, dived
- 91 divorcee
- 92 Dnestr
- 93 doctor
- 94 DOD
- 95 dollar sign
- 96 domino, dominoes

- 97 do’s and don’ts
- 98 double
- 99 doughnut
- 100 douse, dowse
- 101 downhill
- 102 downpayment
- 103 downplay
- 104 Down’s syndrome
- 105 downtown
- 106 draft, draught
- 107 dramatic
- 108 driving licence, but American style driver's license
- 109 drop out, dropout
- 110 drop shot
- 111 drown
- 112 drunk, drunken
- 113 Druze
- 114 dual, duel
- 115 dual listing
- 116 due
- 117 due process
- 118 Duesseldorf, Germany
- 119 duffel
- 120 dumb
- 121 Dunkirk
- 122 dwarf, dwarfs
- 123 dyeing, dying
- 124 dyke
- 125 dynamo, dynamos
- 126 dysentery

dachshund

Daimler-Benz

Note hyphen.

dais, lectern, podium, pulpit, rostrum

A speaker stands behind a lectern (a stand for notes) on a podium and in a pulpit. Several speakers can fit on a dais or rostrum or platform.

Dalai Lama

Tibet’s most revered spiritual leader, seen by Tibetans as the reincarnation of a long line of

Buddhist god-kings. The Panchen Lama is the second highest figure in Tibet's spiritual hierarchy.

dashes

Use dashes sparingly, never to set off relative clauses in a sentence. For the sake of clarity, dashes should be double (–) and hyphens single (-). A single dash may be used as a separator in alerts and headlines where space is tight, but not in text. Dashes are followed by lower case unless they are used to label sections of a list: The study concluded: – Four out of five people said they preferred watching television to playing sport – Only one in 10 respondents had played sport in the past month – Six out of 10 had watched sport on television in the past month

data

Strictly a plural noun, but treat as if it were singular, e.g. The data was corrupted.

database

One word.

dates

Use the sequence month/day/year, e.g. Iraq's invasion of Kuwait on Aug. 2., 1990, led to... or the August 2 invasion or the August 1990 invasion. If a specific date is used, put the year inside commas. Spell out months in text but abbreviate them followed by a full stop when they are used with a specific date – Jan.1, Feb. 14, Aug. 5, Sept. 11, Oct. 24, Nov. 5, Dec. 25.

In datelines, use Jan Feb March April May June July Aug Sept Oct Nov Dec with no full stop. If you need to abbreviate for a table use the first three letters of each month: Jan Feb Mar Apr May Jun Jul Aug Sep Oct Nov Dec. There is no full stop. When spelling out duration, write the tournament runs from May 22 to 24 not runs from May 22-24. Write arrived on Monday not arrived Monday and on Tuesday, on Wednesday, on Thursday rather than yesterday, today, tomorrow. An exception is made for copy in the Americas, where because of subscriber preferences our style is to drop the "on" before days of the week. Write the 1939-45 war but from 1939 to 1945 not from 1939-45. Similarly between 1939 and 1945 and not between 1939-45. Write 9/11, not 9-11.

daughter-in-law, daughters-in-law

daylight-saving time

days of the week

Capitalise them and do not abbreviate. If necessary in tabulation abbreviate without a full stop: Mon, Tues, Wed, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun

day to day

Hyphenate if used as an adjective. We live from day to day and find our food on a day-to-day basis.

D-Day

Allies' invasion of France, June 6, 1944.

DEA

Drug Enforcement Administration (U.S.).

deaf

Describe people as deaf only if they are totally without hearing. Otherwise write that their hearing is impaired or that they have only partial hearing. Never use deaf and dumb. See stereotypes and value judgments

deathbed

Both noun and adjective.

death toll

Two words.

decades

1960s not 1960’s. The early forties, sixties, seventies.

decided, decisive

If you have decided views which are clear and resolute it is easier to make a decision and be decisive.

decimals

Figures are normally rounded to two significant decimals, with halves rounded upwards. Thus 15.564 becomes 15.56, while 15.565 becomes 15.57.

decimate

Literally to reduce by one-tenth, loosely to reduce very heavily. Not, however, to virtually wipe out.

defeat

You are defeated by something not to something. Do not write West Bromwich Albion’s defeat to Wolverhampton Wanderers.

defence, but American style is defense

defendant

definite, definitive

Definite means fixed, exact or clear. Definitive conveys elements of limiting or final. The board made a definite decision about its definitive offer.

definitely

Usually adds little as either an adverb or an ajective. Avoid.

defunct

No need to use, now defunct.

defuse, diffuse

To defuse is to make something harmless, to diffuse is to disperse.

degree-day

A measurement used in the consumption and trading of energy. It is a difference of one degree for one day compared with a standard average temperature for that day.

deletion

Indicate the omission of words from a quoted passage by using three full stops with a space before and after (also known as ellipsis), e.g. “We will fight ... and we will win.” The word after the dots is capitalised if it is part of a new sentence, e.g. “We will fight and we will win ... We will never surrender”. You may drop words in this way only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote.

delight

To delight is a transitive verb that requires an object. Jane Bloggs delighted her fans with an easy victory not Jane Bloggs delighted with an easy victory. Delight is a strong verb. Use sparingly and to good effect.

demagogue

Not demagog.

demise

Means death or to transfer on death, not just decline or decay.

demolished, destroyed

Do not write totally demolished, totally destroyed. Both words imply complete destruction.

demonstrator

denials

Never qualify a denial, e.g. flatly denied, categorically denied, unless quoting someone. A no comment is not a denial. Write declined to comment rather than refused to comment, which suggests that the person you spoke to was under an obligation to comment. See rebut, refute.

denote, connote

Denote is to indicate or mark by a sign. A wedding ring denoted his married status. Connote is to imply attributes. Marriage connotes short-term bliss. Both words are probably best avoided.

dependant, dependent

The person in a state of dependency is a dependant. He is dependent. But American style uses dependent as both noun and adjective.

deprecate

Express disapproval of, deplore. Do not confuse with depreciate.

depreciation

A gradual change in the value of a currency usually as a result of market forces. Do not confuse with devaluation, when a government orders a weaking currency change.

depression

A period of low economic activity with high unemployment and numerous business failures. Capitalise when referring to the one in October, 1929: the Great Depression. See also recession, slump.

depths

Convert metres to feet not yards. One metre equals 3.28 feet.

deputy

Do not use to mean member of parliament. Although it is often encountered as a literal translation from several European languages, it can have other meanings in the English-speaking world. Legislator is preferred.

de rigueur

Not de rigeur. Best avoided.

desiccate

designate

Hyphenate. Capitalise the first word, but only if used as a formal title before a name, President-designate Joan Brown but chairman-designate.

despatch

Use dispatch for the noun and verb, although send is a better substitute for the verb.

desperate

despite the fact that

Use although.

detente

The easing or end of strained relations between countries.

devaluation

A downwards change in the value of a currency, the opposite of revaluation, and usually imposed by government order. Do not confuse with depreciation which is a more gradual change usually brought about by market forces.

device, devise

Device is the noun, devise is the verb.

dexterous

diagnosis, prognosis

Diagnose a disease not a person. Prognosis is forecasting, or a forecast, especially of a disease.

diarrhoea, but diarrhea in American style

dictator

Use of the word dictator implies a value judgment, so avoid it unless quoting someone.

dictionary

Use Chambers 20th Century Dictionary as a reference. Use the first spelling listed. However, America uses Webster's New World College Dictionary.

die-hard

Hyphenated.

dietitian

differ from, differ with

If you differ from someone you are unlike each other. If you differ with someone then you disagree. The expression differ from can be used in both senses.

different

Can often be excised, as in Yorkshire produces six different types of cheese.

from, different to

Prefer different from, which is acceptable in all contexts, rather than different to or different than.

diffuse, defuse

To diffuse is to disperse, to defuse is to make something harmless.

dike

Not dyke.

dilapidated

Not delapidated.

dilemma

Do not use simply to mean a problem. A dilemma arises when faced with two (or more) undesirable alternatives.

diphtheria

Note the h after the p.

disabled people

As with a person's race or sex, we should mention physical disabilities only if they are relevant to the story. Report disabilities without sentimentality or condescension. See stereotypes and value judgments

disassemble, dissemble

Disassemble is to take apart, dissemble is to conceal or disguise, or be a hypocrite.

disassociate

Use dissociate.

disaster

Do not devalue this word by overuse. Avoid it in sports reporting.

disc, disk

Use disk when writing about computers, disc in all other contexts. Slipped disc but computer hard disk.

discernible

Not discernable.

discomfit, discomfort

Discomfit is to rout, defeat, balk or disconcert. It is much stronger than discomfort which is to make uneasy or deprive of comfort.

discount rate

Most central banks do not use this expression any more, so find out the relevant interest rate they use in a specific country to guide the base level of interest rates.

discover

Find is shorter and better.

discreet, discrete

Discreet is prudent or modest while discrete is separate.

discriminatory language

Do not use language that perpetuates sexual, racial, religious or other stereotypes. Such language is offensive, out of date and often simply inaccurate. A person’s gender, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or marital status should not be cited unless it is relevant to the story. Even then, consideration must be given to where in the story such information needs to be placed. It is wrong to assume that police, firefighters or soldiers are men. Police is shorter than policemen anyway. Do not describe a woman’s dress or hairstyle where you would not describe a man’s. Where possible use the same term for men and women, e.g. mayor or poet, not mayoress or poetess. Use chairman, chairwoman not chair; spokesman, spokeswoman not spokesperson.

diseases

Do not capitalise e.g. leukemia, pneumonia, except when named after a person e.g. Parkinson's disease.

disinterested, uninterested

Disinterested means impartial while uninterested means the opposite of interested. People can be both interested in an issue and disinterested.

disorientate

Use disorient, which is shorter.

dispatch

Not despatch. Including dispatch rider, mentioned in dispatches, and dispatch box. In most cases send is better, as of troops, aid, etc.

dispel

Dispelled, dispelling.

dispensable

Not dispensible. Think of dispensation.

disposal, disposition

Disposal is get rid of, disposition is arrange or distribute.

distances

Use figures figures for 10 and above, spell out one to nine miles/km.

distinct, distinctive

Distinct means separate, clear, well-defined. Distinctive is a distinguishing quality. A distinct mark on his forehead made him distinctive from his twin brother.

district attorney

Do not abbreviate to DA. Capitalise before a name: District Attorney Jack Walton.

DJIA or the Dow

The Dow Jones industrial average is the main benchmark U.S. stock market index.

dive, dived

Not dove for past tense.

divorcee

Male or female.

Dnestr

Use Transdniestria for the region of Moldova, not Dnestr.

doctor

When used as title for a physician, abbreviate to Dr without a full stop. Do not use Dr for doctors of philosophy, etc.

DOD

Department of Defense, the Pentagon (U.S.). Avoid using the acronym.

dollar sign

Use the dollar sign $ before numbers, e.g. $100. Use upper-case abbreviations A, C, HK etc. immediately before the dollar sign (no space in between) to indicate Australian, Canadian, Hong Kong and other non-U.S. dollars, e.g. C$6.4 billion. The following non-U.S. dollars can be abbreviated after first reference: Australia (A), Brunei (B), Canada (C), Fiji (F), Hong Kong (HK), Jamaica (J), New Zealand (NZ), Singapore (S), Taiwan (T) and Zimbabwe (Z). If there is no letter before the $ sign, readers will assume U.S. dollars are meant.

domino, dominoes

do’s and don’ts

double

Double-barrelled, double-breasted, double-cross, but double fault in tennis, doubleheader.

doughnut

Not donut, unless it is part of a formal company name.

douse, dowse

Douse is to plunge into water, to splash or to extinguish. Dowse is to search for underground water using a divining rod.

downhill

One word in Alpine skiing.

downpayment

One word.

downplay

Write play down.

Down’s syndrome

Do not use mongol or mongoloid. American style is Down syndrome.

downtown

Write central Paris not downtown Paris.

draft, draught

Use draft for a sketch, a detachment of men, a money order, draught for a drink or the depth to which a ship sinks in water.

dramatic

A much overworked word. If an event is dramatic it should be clear from the story.

driving licence, but American style driver's license

drop out, dropout

The verb is drop out, the noun dropout.

drop shot

Two words in tennis.

drown

He drowned, or he drowned his cat, but not he was drowned, unless by someone else.

drunk, drunken

I am drunk, he is drunk, but drunken behaviour, drunken driver, not drunk driver. Also dunkenness, not drunkeness.

Druze

Not Druse. A sect of Islam whose adherents live mainly in Lebanon, Syria and Israel.

dual, duel

Dual is twofold, e.g. dual-purpose. A duel is a fight between two people.

dual listing

A company which is listed on more than one stock exchange.

due

Due is an adjective and must modify a noun or a pronoun. It cannot modify a verb. When in doubt replace it with because of, owing to or caused by. It is correct to write The drop in temperature was due to a broken window but not The temperature dropped due to a broken window. The simple rule is if in doubt always use because of.

due process

Can mean several things. Make sure the meaning is clear.

Duesseldorf, Germany

duffel

Not duffle. From the town of Duffel, near Antwerp.

dumb

Use mute.

Dunkirk

Not Dunkerque.

dwarf, dwarfs

Not dwarves.

dyeing, dying

Dyeing changes the colour of clothes. Dying is destined for death.

dyke

Use dike.

dynamo, dynamos

dysentery

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 12:34, 18 March 2009.

E

Contents

- 1 each
- 2 each and every
- 3 earth
- 4 earthquakes
- 5 Eastern Rite Churches
- 6 EBIT
- 7 EBITDA
- 8 EBITDAR
- 9 EBRD
- 10 ECB
- 11 Ecuadorean
- 12 effete
- 13 Eid al-Adha
- 14 Eid al-Fitr
- 15 Eire
- 16 either
- 17 elderly
- 18 -elect
- 19 election/elections
- 20 elicit, illicit
- 21 ellipsis
- 22 elusive
- 23 email
- 24 embarrass, embarrassed, embarrassing
- 25 embargo, boycott
- 26 embattled
- 27 emerge
- 28 emigrate, immigrate
- 29 emotive words
- 30 employee
- 31 enormity
- 32 encyclopedia
- 33 England
- 34 en route
- 35 enquire, enquiry
- 36 enrol
- 37 ensure, insure, assure
- 38 envelop, envelope
- 39 envision
- 40 epicentre
- 41 EPS
- 42 equal, equalling, equalled
- 43 equable, equitable
- 44 equally as
- 45 escalate, escalation

- 46 escapers, not escapees
- 47 Esfahan, not Isfahan, Iran.
- 48 Eskimo
- 49 espresso
- 50 estimate
- 51 estimated at about
- 52 et cetera
- 53 Ethiopian names
- 54 ethnicity
- 55 euphemism
- 56 EU
- 57 euro
- 58 Eurobond
- 59 European
- 60 European names
- 61 Eurosceptic
- 62 euro zone
- 63 eventuate
- 64 ever
- 65 every day, everyday
- 66 everyone, every one
- 67 evoke, invoke
- 68 ex-
- 69 exacerbate
- 70 exactly
- 71 exaggerate
- 72 exam
- 73 execution
- 74 except, accept
- 75 excerpt
- 76 exchange rates
- 77 exclamation mark, exclamation point
- 78 exorbitant
- 79 exorcise
- 80 expatriate
- 81 expect, anticipate
- 82 expel, expelling, expelled
- 83 explicit, implicit
- 84 exports overseas
- 85 extra
- 86 extra cover
- 87 extramarital
- 88 eyewitness

each

Each takes a singular verb. Each of us is guilty. Be careful when it follows a noun that is the real subject of the sentence. We each are guilty of theft, which is equivalent to We are all guilty of theft, each one of us.

each and every

Plain each will do, or plain every.

earth

Generally lower case, but capitalise the Planet Earth.

earthquakes

Use plain “magnitude” to describe earthquakes. This is a measure of ground motion as recorded on seismographs. The scale devised by Charles Richter is not reliable for certain types of earthquake and is no longer widely used. The U.S. Geological Survey favours magnitude, more exactly known as the "moment magnitude", which gives readings consistent with the Richter scale. Magnitude is not an automatic guide to likely damage. This depends on other factors such as the depth of the quake below the earth's surface. The strongest quake ever measured was 9.5 magnitude in Chile in May, 1960, while there are more than 1 million minor tremors of between 2 and 2.9 magnitude every year. Besides Richter, there are other ways to measure earthquakes including the Mercalli scale or the Japanese Shindo scale. These measure the intensity of an earthquake only at particular points on the earth's surface without giving an overall reading. The epicentre is point on the earth's surface above the subterranean centre, or focus, of an earthquake.

Eastern Rite Churches

Eastern Rite Churches returned to communion with Rome after the 1054 East-West split between Rome and Orthodoxy but worship in an Eastern, usually Orthodox rite. Each returned to unity with Rome at a different time in the past 900 years or so.

EBIT

Earnings before interest and tax, also called operating earnings.

EBITDA

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortisation, also called core earnings.

EBITDAR

Earnings before interest, tax, depreciation, amortisation and rent. Accounting term used by analysts and companies instead of EBITDA in industries where equipment or asset rentals figure large, such as aircraft rentals by airlines.

EBRD

European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, set up by the major industrialised countries to help centrally planned economies in 27 countries, from central Europe to central Asia, move to a free market in a democratic environment. It is owned by governments but invests mainly in private enterprise, usually with commercial partners.

ECB

European Central Bank, based in Frankfurt, sets monetary policy for the euro zone countries.

Ecuadorean

effete

Means exhausted or sterile, not just weak or foppish.

Eid al-Adha

A Muslim holiday marking the climax of the annual pilgrimage (haj) on the 10th day of the 12th month of the Muslim calendar.

Eid al-Fitr

A Muslim holiday marking the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Muslim calendar.

Eire

Use Republic of Ireland.

either

Either is a choice of two things. You can either come or go. The word can often simply be excised. It cannot be used with a choice of more than two things. You can have ice cream, cake or pudding. Not You can have either ice cream, cake or pudding. Do not use either when you mean each. He had a beautiful girl on each arm, not on either arm.

elderly

Avoid, because the terms are always relative. In some societies a 50-year-old is already aged. In others a sprightly 90-year-old who has just written a novel or run a marathon would object to being called aged or elderly.

-elect

Hyphenated and lower case. President-elect Frederick Green.

election/elections

Singular if it is a single parliamentary election, plural if several votes are taking place contemporaneously. A general election in a country such as Britain is singular, but when the United States votes on the same day for a president, and members of the Senate and the House of Representatives, these are elections.

elicit, illicit

Elicit is to draw forth or to evoke. Illicit is not permitted or illegal. A dalliance may elicit an illicit relationship.

ellipsis

Indicate the omission of words from a quoted passage by using three full stops with a space before and after, e.g. “We will fight ... and we will win.” The word after the dots is capitalised if it is part of a new sentence, e.g. “We will fight and we will win ... We will never surrender”. You may drop words in this way only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote.

elusive

Usually superfluous and shown by context. Police are hunting an elusive killer.

email

One word. Other compound words prefixed with e- should be hyphenated, however, eg e-commerce, e-banking.

embarrass, embarrassed, embarrassing

Double r and double s.

embargo, boycott

An embargo is a legal ban on trade. A boycott is the refusal of a group to deal with a person or use a commodity.

embattled

A tired clichÃ©. Do not use.

emerge

News does not just emerge, so it is a nonsense to write It has emerged that. Give the reader a clear source for all your information.

emigrate, immigrate

You emigrate when you leave a country and you immigrate when you come to a country. Similarly emigrant, immigrant

emotive words

Some words have emotional significance and must be used with special care in the interest of objectivity. Examples of such words are terrorist (see separate entry on terrorism), extremist and mob. Avoid using contentious labels. If we describe a violent act as terrorism we could imply the journalist is judging the action and taking sides. It is not the role of a Reuters journalist to adjudicate. We can use such words when we directly quote named sources. When giving background in a running story on a specific act of violence, refer in general terms to terrorism without attribution to particular groups or making judgment. There are alternatives to terrorist which are more factual, e.g. gunmen, bombers, bomb attacks, assassinations. The word guerrilla can be more readily used when describing forces fighting governments for control of territory, most usually in the countryside. Relatively small groups are best described by their ideologies or politics. The basic rule should be to describe what a movement wants or is aiming for rather than apply a label.

employee

enormity

Does not mean just very big, but an outrage, iniquity or great crime.

encyclopedia

England

Do not use England as a synonym for Britain or the United Kingdom. Britain comprises England, Scotland and Wales. The United Kingdom comprises Britain and Northern Ireland. Use Britain unless the Irish context is important.

en route

Two words.

enquire, enquiry

Use inquire, inquiry.

enrol

enrolled, enrolling, enrolment, but in American style enroll, enrolling, enrollment.

ensure, insure, assure

Ensure means to make sure, insure to guarantee against loss. You assure your life.

envelop, envelope

The verb is envelop, enveloping, enveloped. The noun is envelope.

envision

Use envisage.

epicentre

The point on the earth's surface above the centre, or focus, of an earthquake.

EPS

Earnings per share. The portion of a company's profit allocated to each outstanding share of common stock. EPS serves as an indicator of a company's profitability.

equal, equalling, equalled

Do not write more equal or less equal because things are either equal or not. Use more or less equitable. In American style, equal, equaling, equaled.

equable, equitable

Equable is even and without great variation or extremes. Equitable is just or fair.

equally as

Do not use together. Either She was equally bright or She was as bright.

escalate, escalation

In most cases rise or increase would be simpler and as effective for both verb and noun. Escalate may be used where we are talking of a step-by-step increase.

escapers, not escapees

Esfahan, not Isfahan, Iran.

Eskimo

Do not use to refer to the people of northern Canada, who use the term Inuit to describe themselves. There are about 56,000 Inuit in Canada. They live in an area from Labrador to Alaska. The singular is Inuk, the language is Inuktitut.

espresso

estimate

When referring to economic trends and business performance, use estimate to refer to an approximate calculation of performance up to the present (or a date in the past). Use forecast when

referring to expected future performance based on available data. Use projection to refer to probable future performance based on current trends or assumptions of likely developments.

estimated at about

Tautology. Plain estimated at will do.

et cetera

Use the abbreviation etc. (with full stop), but try to avoid.

Ethiopian names

The word ato means Mr and should not be used. Use only the first name at second reference, e.g. Mengistu Haile Mariam – Mengistu said ...

ethnicity

See race

euphemism

Euphemism, beloved of bureaucrats, social scientists and the military, seeks to cloak reality, sometimes unpleasant, in innocuous words. Shun it e.g: kill not terminate with extreme prejudice, poor not disadvantaged. Severe storms kill people, not leave them dead.

EU

The European Union. The Treaty on European Union, commonly known as the Maastricht Treaty, came into effect on November 1, 1993 and formally created a new entity, the EU, with responsibilities expanded beyond the EC's focus on economic and trade issues.

euro

No capital letter

Eurobond

Capitalised. Bond issued by a country or company in a currency that is not their own, e.g. a Japanese company issuing a dollar bond. Not to be confused with euro-denominated bonds, which are bonds issued in euros.

European

Do not use as a synonym for white in a racial context.

European names

Use lower case for particles within a personal name, e.g. F. W. de Klerk, Maurice de la Haye, Richard von Weizsaecker, Miguel de la Madrid, Ramon da Silva, Jaime Aragon y Galicia, Hendrik van den Berg. The particles are usually retained at second reference, but in German usage the von is dropped. Upper case is used when such particles occur at the beginning of a geographical name, e.g. Las Palmas, El Salvador, La Raya del Palancar or at the start of a sentence, e.g. De Klerk said ... See also Spanish and Portuguese names

Eurosceptic

One word.

euro zone

Two words, lower case, no hyphen. The group of countries that have the euro as their currency.

eventuate

Prefer result.

ever

tautology when it follows a superlative (as in biggest, best, strongest etc). In such cases, drop it unless in direct quotes.

every day, everyday

Two words for the adverb and one word for the adjective. Every day we remind him not to wear everyday clothes to a wedding.

everyone, every one

Everyone is all the people; every one is every single person. If you can add without exception then you need every one. Everyone in the village loves a party and every one wore fancy dress.

evoke, invoke

evoke means to bring to mind, invoke to call upon solemnly, e.g. In a speech evoking memories of the civil war he invoked God’s help in preventing fresh bloodshed.

ex-

Make sure this prefix is hyphenated to the word it limits. Note the difference between a Conservative ex-minister and an ex-Conservative minister. Prefer former in written text , e.g. Former Brazilian finance minister Jorge Braga was killed on Tuesday when... Ex- may be used for brevity in headlines, e.g. “Ex-minister killed in Brazil air crash”.

exacerbate

A clumsy word devalued by overuse. It means to make bitter or more violent. Usually writers mean simply to make worse.

exactly

Cannot be qualified, so 'almost exactly' is not acceptable.

exaggerate

exam

Contraction for academic examinations only.

execution

Use only for lawful killings after due judicial process.

except, accept

Except is to leave out. Accept is to take or receive.

excerpt

from, not of.

exchange rates

Normally quote only a single rate for the value of one currency against another, usually the middle rate between the bid and offer quotations. For example, if the bid and offer rates of a particular currency against the dollar were 2.6050 and 2.6150 we would take the difference between the two (0.0100), halve it (0.0050) and add to 2.6050. This gives a rate of 2.61. If the difference is an odd number, quote as near to the mid-point as possible. In foreign exchange market reports give the bid and offer rates. Rates are generally carried to four places right of the decimal, except for yen, which goes to two places. However, if both bid and offer are round numbers at fewer decimal places, leave off the extra zeros. Do not repeat recurring numbers when giving the second rate in the sequence, e.g. 1.4845/65 not 1.4845/4865, except when the rate moves to a new higher digit: The dollar rose to 1.4895/4905 marks from 1.4850/60 at yesterday's close. Money market rates and yields are generally quoted in decimals, so if a trader talks of a 6-1/4 percent yield this is best written in copy as 6.25 percent.

exclamation mark, exclamation point

Avoid other than in quotations.

exorbitant

exorcise

expatriate

Not expatriot. But compatriot.

expect, anticipate

These are not synonyms. If you anticipate something, you not only expect it but take precautionary action to deal with it.

expel, expelling, expelled

explicit, implicit

Explicit is stated plainly; implicit is implied or suggested.

exports overseas

A tautology. Exports is sufficient.

extra

Do not use a hyphen when it means 'outside of' unless the prefix is followed by a word beginning with 'a' or a capital letter.

extra cover

Two words for the field position in cricket.

extramarital

One word.

eyewitness

prefer witness.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 16:58, 3 December 2008.

F

Contents

- 1 FAA
- 2 face to face
- 3 facility
- 4 Fahrenheit
- 5 Falklands
- 6 fallacy, fallibility
- 7 Fallopian tubes
- 8 FAO
- 9 Faroes
- 10 farther, farthest
- 11 fast bowler
- 12 faze, phase
- 13 FBI
- 14 FCC
- 15 FDA
- 16 fears, hopes
- 17 fedayeen
- 18 feet, foot
- 19 fellow
- 20 Ferris wheel
- 21 fewer, less than
- 22 fiance, fiancee
- 23 fiasco, fiascos
- 24 fief
- 25 field marshal
- 26 FIFA
- 27 fighter jets
- 28 Figures
- 29 filibuster
- 30 Filipino
- 31 film titles
- 32 finalise
- 33 financial year
- 34 firefighter
- 35 firm
- 36 first lady
- 37 first quarter, first-quarter
- 38 first slip
- 39 First World War
- 40 fiscal year
- 41 flack, flak
- 42 flair, flare
- 43 flaunt, flout
- 44 flay, flail
- 45 Fleet Street
- 46 flight numbers

- 47 flip-flop
- 48 flounder, founder
- 49 flyer
- 50 flyhalf
- 51 focus, focused
- 52 following
- 53 follow up, follow-up
- 54 foodstuffs, supplies
- 55 foot
- 56 foot-and-mouth disease
- 57 forbear, forebear
- 58 forbid, forbidding, forbade
- 59 forced
- 60 forecast
- 61 forego, forgo
- 62 forehand
- 63 foreign language phrases
- 64 foreign exchange rates
- 65 forensic
- 66 foreseeable
- 67 forever, not for ever.
- 68 forex
- 69 former, latter
- 70 format, formatted
- 71 formula, formulas, not formulae.
- 72 Formula One
- 73 forsake, forsaken, forsook
- 74 forswear
- 75 Fort
- 76 fortnight
- 77 fortuitous, fortunate
- 78 forward
- 79 foul, fowl
- 80 four-wheel drive
- 81 Fourth of July
- 82 fractions
- 83 Frankenstein
- 84 Freddie Mac
- 85 free kick
- 86 french fries
- 87 fresco, frescoes
- 88 Frisbee
- 89 front line
- 90 FSA
- 91 FTC
- 92 front-runner, front-running
- 93 fuchsia
- 94 fuel, fuelled, but in American style fuel, fueling, fueled
- 95 fulfil, fulfilling, fulfilled, but fulfilment

- 96 full
- 97 fulsome
- 98 fundamentalist
- 99 fundraiser, fundraising
- 100 fused participles
- 101 furlough, not furlow
- 102 future plans

FAA

Federal Aviation Administration (US).

face to face

Redundant when used to describe a meeting.

facility

A word that can mean almost anything. Avoid and be specific if possible, e.g. a base, a factory, a depot.

Fahrenheit

Use Fahrenheit if it is the scale of the country involved, with Celsius conversion in brackets. Spell in full at first reference, abbreviating to C and F subsequently, 25 Celsius, 40C. Freezing point in Celsius is 0 degrees, in Fahrenheit 32 degrees. Convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit for temperatures above zero by multiplying by 9, dividing by 5 and adding 32, e.g. 20 Celsius (68 Fahrenheit). For temperatures below zero multiply by nine, divide by five and subtract from 32, e.g. minus 15C (5F), minus 20C (minus 4F). Convert from Fahrenheit to Celsius for temperatures above 32 by subtracting 32, multiplying by five and dividing by nine. For temperatures below freezing take the total number of degrees by which the temperature is below 32, multiply by five and divide by nine, e.g. minus 8F is 40 below freezing, 40 x 5/9 gives you 22, therefore minus 22C.

Falklands

This is the internationally accepted name of the Falkland Islands but from an Argentine dateline they may also be called by the Argentine name – the Malvinas (Falkland Islands).

fallacy, fallibility

Fallacy is something regarded as true but actually false. Fallibility is a capacity or tendency to make mistakes.

Fallopian tubes

Capitalise Fallopian.

FAO

Food and Agriculture Organisation (U.N. – Rome). See www.fao.org

Faroes

Not Faeroes.

farther, farthest

Use further, furthest except when referring to physical distance.

fast bowler

Two words in cricket.

faze, phase

Faze is to worry or disturb. Phase is a stage in growth or development.

FBI

The Federal Bureau of Investigation is the premier law enforcement agency in the United States. It is part of the U.S. Department of Justice. The FBI investigates violations of federal law, including high-profile cases on espionage, drug cartels, organised violence and crime. FBI may be used alone at first reference. If the full name is used alone at first reference the initials need not be bracketed in.

FCC

Federal Communications Commission (U.S.).

FDA

Food and Drug Administration. U.S. regulatory body for the safety and effectiveness of foods, human and veterinary drugs, medical devices and cosmetics.

fears, hopes

Beware of hopes and fears. Unattributed, they represent opinions. We cannot refer to hopes for a settlement of Middle East problems or fears of another oil price increase without saying who is doing the hoping or fearing. But we can refer unsourced to the common hopes and fears of humanity, e.g. Hopes of reaching the trapped miners rose... or Fears that a new epidemic of cholera might sweep... See also emotive words.

fedayeen

Arab or Islamic guerrillas. The singular is feda'i so use guerrilla for simplicity's sake when referring to one person.

feet, foot

One foot, several feet. Use foot singular as the adjective, e.g. a 12-foot-high wall.

fellow

Often unnecessary, especially before countryman or countrywoman.

Ferris wheel

fewer, less than

Use fewer when referring to numbers of individuals or individual items, less for quantities, e.g. Fewer than 10 rescuers were hurt but Less than 1,000 tons of coal was lost.

fiance, fiancee

fiance is the man, fiancee the woman.

fiasco, fiascos

fief

Not fiefdom.

field marshal

Note only one l.

FIFA

International Football Federation, based in Zurich (soccer). See www.fifa.com

fighter jets

Write fighter planes, since modern fighters are almost invariably jets.

Figures

Always check any numbers in a story, and then recheck them. Are they internally consistent? If a number rises to a new number then is the second number larger than the first? Check that the units of measurement are not out by a factor of 10, or a 100, or a 1,000. Try to appreciate the underlying logic of the numbers rather than accepting them at face value. Ask yourself if the numbers are feasible and realistic. Remember that a journalist plus a calculator often equals mistake.

Spell out the digits one to nine in text except for dates and times, when figures should always be used, e.g. The four foreign ministers will meet at 6 p.m. (1700 GMT) on March 3. The same applies to ordinal numbers: first, second, third etc up to ninth, then 10th 100th 144th etc. Use numerals in ages, 4-year-old, and before millions and billions, 2 million, 5 billion. Use numerals before percent, 6 percent. Use numerals for dimensions, He lost 4 cm from the end of his finger.

Write 10 and above as figures except at the start of a sentence, e.g. Fourteen people were killed when 20 tons of ice crashed through the roof. Do not however start a sentence with a complex figure, e.g. Two hundred and forty-three runners finished the Boston marathon ...Where possible rewrite the sentence to avoid starting with a number if it is long and clumsy.

Repeat figures in stories when they are unexpected and err on the side of caution. Place repeated figures in brackets to remove any doubt. Write ... raised bank rate to 6.5 percent (repeat 6.5 percent).

Figures in brackets are generally used only for comparisons. In comparisons always put new figures before old ones, e.g. The U.S. dollar closed at 0.9782 euros compared with 0.9804 at mid-morning.

Do not run two sets of figures together. This can lead to errors. Separate them by a word or spell out one of the two, e.g. 20,000 new 50-cent shares or 20,000 shares with a nominal value of 50 cents each, not 20,000 50-cent shares.

Write fractions as 4-1/2, 8-3/4 etc.

Round off unwieldy figures, e.g. Japan produced 1.45 million cars in the six months ended... not Japan produced 1,453,123 cars... As a rule round off millions to the nearest 10,000, thousands to the nearest 100, hundreds to the nearest 10.

Figures are normally rounded to two significant decimals, with halves rounded upwards. Thus 15.564 becomes 15.56, while 15.565 becomes 15.57.

Do not round interest rates. Give them to the full number of decimal places as given by the source of the information.

Round foreign exchange quotations to four decimal places, e.g. the dollar rose to 0.9784 euros. If a country adjusts its currency, any rate given must not be rounded off, e.g. Manchukistan announced a rate of 5.79831 thaler to the dollar.

Do not round company dividends, e.g. the company announced a dividend of 0.123456 pence per share.

Where totals do not add up because of rounding, this should be explained.

When reporting decimalised figures always use a full stop, e.g. 42.5. Do not follow the practice in continental Europe of using a comma instead of a decimal point. When reporting thousands, use a comma, not a full stop, e.g. 10,000.

When reporting a range of figures use the style 1.2 billion to 1.4 billion not 1.2-1.4 billion or between 400 and 500 miles not between 400-500 miles.

Always spell out billion, except in headlines when it can be abbreviated to bln. Use decimals before million and billion. Write 2.5 million not two and a half million.

Twice – not two time or two times. Bigger numbers should be in the plural, e.g. seven times champion.

Ranges – Repeat the denominator when describing a range of figures, e.g. $22 million to $30 million not $22 to $33 million.

filibuster

To delay parliamentary proceedings by making long speeches.

Filipino

A native of the Philippines. Feminine Filipina. Plural Filipinos, Filipinas. The adjective is Philippine.

film titles

Books, films, plays, poems, operas, songs and works of art: capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. “The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich”, “The Merchant of Venice”, “Gone with the Wind”. The same is true of radio and television programmes other than news and current affairs, e.g. “American Idol” but Meet the Press.

finalise

Use complete, finish.

financial year

The year used for a company's accounting purposes. It can be a calendar year or it can cover a different period, often starting in April. It can also be referred to as the company's fiscal year.

firefighter

Not fireman.

firm

Use firm only for business partnerships. Use company for publicly quoted corporations.

first lady

Lower case in accordance with American style.

first quarter, first-quarter

Two words for the noun, one word for the adjective. First-quarter results will be released shortly after the first quarter.

first slip

Two words for cricket fielding position.

First World War

Use World War One. Not WWI

fiscal year

The one-year bookkeeping period or financial year used by a government. It varies from country to country. In the United States it is October 1 to September 30 and is named as the year in which it ends, so the year ending in September 2005 is fiscal 2005. In Japan the year is April 1 to March 31 and is named as the year in which it starts, so the year ending in March 2005 is fiscal 2004. In text

write out, e.g. fiscal 2003/04 but in alerts and headlines 03/04 may be used for space reasons. Do not shorten to 03/4. The term fiscal year is sometimes used for company accounting periods but it is preferable to say financial or business year.

flack, flak

Flack is an American slang term for a public relations person, to be used only if explained. Flak is anti-aircraft fire or heavy criticism.

flair, flare

A flair is a talent, a flare is an illuminating device.

flaunt, flout

To flaunt is to display ostentatiously (not just to display), to flout is to defy, e. g. By flaunting your wealth you flout convention.

flay, flail

Flay is to flog or subject to savage criticism. Flail is to strike or swing.

Fleet Street

No longer a useful synonym for the British press.

flight numbers

When scheduled flights come into the news – crashes, hijackings, bomb scares. etc. – give the flight number together with other identification such as type of aircraft, airline, destination and route.

flip-flop

flounder, founder

Flounder is a fish or to struggle violently or stumble helplessly. Founder is to subside, sink or collapse in ruins.

flyer

Not flier, but in American style use flier for both aviator and handbill. Some trains and buses use flyer as part of their proper name.

flyhalf

One word for rugby position

focus, focused

Use sparingly.

following

Prefer after as a preposition, e.g. After the crash... not Following the crash...

follow up, follow-up

Two words for the verb, one word for the noun and adjective.

foodstuffs, supplies

In most cases food is enough.

foot

To convert to metres roughly multiply by 3 and divide by 10. To convert precisely multiply by 0.305.

foot-and-mouth disease

Retain the hyphenation even if foot-and-mouth is used alone without the noun it qualifies. Not hoof-and-mouth.

forbear, forebear

Forbear means to abstain or keep oneself in check, a forebear is an ancestor.

forbid, forbidding, forbade

forced

Do not say troops were forced to open fire, or the company was forced to make staff redunant. It implies a judgment.

forecast

Past tense is forecast not forecasted.

forego, forgo

Forego is to precede, forgo to do without.

forehand

One word in tennis.

foreign language phrases

Use such phrases or quotes only in exceptional cases, for instance where no generally recognised English equivalent exists. They must always be explained, e.g. Dismissing the libel action, the judge said, “De minimis non curat lex “ (a Latin phrase meaning “The law does not concern itself with very small matters’).

foreign exchange rates

Use mid-rate in general news stories -- high + low quote divided by 2. See exchange rates

forensic

Of or used in courts of law. Do not use forensic examination when you mean examination by forensic scientists.

foreseeable

forever, not for ever.

forex

A widely used abbreviation for foreign exchange. It can be used in headlines if there are space constraints. Elsewhere, use the full description. Forex is also a club grouping foreign exchange dealers and each major foreign exchange dealing centre has its own forex club.

former, latter

Avoid these expressions, which force readers to read backwards to understand the meaning.

format, formatted

formula, formulas, not formulae.

Formula One

Capitalised in motor sport.

forsake, forsaken, forsook

forswear

Fort

Do not abbreviate in the names of cities or military installations. e.g. Fort Lauderdale.

fortnight

Prefer two weeks.

fortuitous, fortunate

Fortuitous means by chance and fortunate means lucky.

forward

Not forwards.

foul, fowl

Foul is dirty, disfigured or an infraction in sport. Fowl is a bird.

four-wheel drive

Not 4x4 unless it is part of a proper name.

Fourth of July

Or July Fourth for the U.S. holiday.

fractions

Where mathematical precision is not essential, use a quarter, a third, a half rather than 25, 33, 50 percent. In a lead on an opinion poll, for instance, it is better to write Two Germans in three prefer.. than Sixty-nine per cent of Germans prefer.. The precise figure should be given lower in the story. Do not mix decimals and fractions in the same sentence, e.g. do not write 25 per cent of Germans prefer this while two-thirds prefer that... Hyphenate fractions like two-thirds, three-quarters. See also figures.

Frankenstein

The creator, not the monster.

Freddie Mac

Acceptable at first reference but put the full title Federal Home Mortgage Corp. later in the story.

free kick

Two words.

french fries

Lower case.

fresco, frescoes

Frisbee

(trade mark)

front line

Two words as noun. But front-line positions.

FSA

Financial Services Authority, the British regulator for most financial services markets, exchanges and firms.

FTC

Federal Trade Commission (U.S.)

front-runner, front-running

fuchsia

fuel, fuelled, but in American style fuel, fueling, fueled

fulfil, fulfilling, fulfilled, but fulfilment

full

Hyphenate when used to form compound words, e.g. full-length, full-service.

fulsome

Not fullsome. It is not a synonym for lavish. Fulsome praise is excessive and fawning.

fundamentalist

One who believes in the literal truth of a sacred religious text such as the Bible or the Koran. Now more commonly used to describe extreme political and religious views. It has disparaging overtones, so use with care.

fundraiser, fundraising

One word.

fused participles

Defuse them. The bank tried to prevent him selling becomes the bank tried to prevent him from selling.

furlough, not furlow

future plans

Tautology. Just plans will do. Excise it from future prospects and future hopes.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 12:08, 10 November 2010.

G

Contents

- 1 G3
- 2 G5
- 3 G7
- 4 G8
- 5 G10
- 6 G24
- 7 G30
- 8 G77
- 9 GAO
- 10 Gaborone
- 11 gaff, gaffe
- 12 gage, gauge
- 13 gales
- 14 gallon
- 15 Gallup Poll
- 16 Gambia
- 17 gambit
- 18 Gandhi
- 19 gantlet, gauntlet
- 20 gaol
- 21 gas
- 22 gay
- 23 gearing
- 24 GDP
- 25 Geneva Conventions
- 26 gender
- 27 general
- 28 Gentile
- 29 generation -- first/second
- 30 geriatrics
- 31 Germany
- 32 German spellings
- 33 get, got
- 34 ghetto, ghetto.
- 35 GI, GIs
- 36 giant
- 37 gibe, gybe, jibe
- 38 Gibraltar, Strait of
- 39 gilt-edge
- 40 Gipsy
- 41 girl
- 42 Girl Guides
- 43 glamour, glamorous, glamorise
- 44 global
- 45 GMT – Greenwich Mean Time
- 46 GNP

- 47 goalkeeper
- 48 gobbledygook
- 49 go-between
- 50 God
- 51 godchild, goddaughter, godfather, godmother, godparents
- 52 Godthaab
- 53 going public
- 54 golden share
- 55 Golden Week
- 56 good, bad
- 57 goodbye
- 58 goodwill
- 59 gorilla
- 60 gourmand, gourmet
- 61 Gospel
- 62 governance
- 63 Government Accountability Office (U.S.)
- 64 governor-general, governors-general
- 65 graffiti
- 66 gram
- 67 grammar
- 68 granddad, granddaughter
- 69 grand jury
- 70 Grand Prix
- 71 grand slam
- 72 grass court
- 73 Great Britain
- 74 great-
- 75 grey, but gray in American style
- 76 grievous
- 77 grisly, grizzly
- 78 gross domestic product
- 79 ground rules
- 80 gross national product
- 81 grovel, grovelled
- 82 grow
- 83 gruelling
- 84 guerrilla, gorilla
- 85 guest
- 86 Gulf
- 87 gully, not gulley
- 88 gunwale
- 89 Gurkha
- 90 guttural
- 91 Gypsy

G3

The world’s leading capitalist economies – Germany, Japan and the USA.

G5

The five largest capitalist economies: the United States, Japan, Germany, France and the United Kingdom.

G7

A forum for the world's leading industrial nations to meet and discuss policy. The G7 members are Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the Unites States. The G7 finance ministers and central bankers meet to discuss the economic outlook, exchange rate policy and financial markets.

G8

The G7 countries plus Russia. Russia was invited to join the 1991 G7 summit and its role has been gradually formalised. G8 meetings are limited to heads of state and government, discussing world affairs. Some issues at this level are still regarded as the preserve of the G7.

G10

The G7 leading capitalist countries plus Belgium, The Netherlands and Sweden. Subsequently joined by Switzerland to make 11 but still referred to as the G10. It works within the framework of the IMF to coordinate fiscal and monetary policies for a stable world economic system.

G24

An informal group of developing countries formed to represent their interests in negotiations on international monetary matters. Eight members each from Africa, Asia and Latin America.

G30

A private, non-profit group of industry leaders, bankers, central bankers and academics that discusses and studies international economic and financial market issues.

G77

Originally established with 77 developing countries, but now considerably expanded, to help promote the views of developing countries on international trade and development within the United

Nations.

GAO

Government Accountability Office (U.S.). Formerly the General Accounting Office .Can be abbreviated to GAO in headlines or at second reference.

Gaborone

Not Gabarone, Botswana.

gaff, gaffe

Gaff is a hook, gaffe is a mistake.

gage, gauge

A gage is a pledge or to offer as a guarantee. Gauge is a standard or means of measurement.

gales

Use gales rather than gale-force winds. A gale is less powerful than a storm in nautical parlance.

gallon

To convert Imperial gallons to litres roughly multiply by 9 and divide by 2. To convert precisely multiply by 4.546.To convert US gallons to litres roughly multiply by 4. To convert precisely multiply by 3.785. To convert Imperial gallons to U.S. gallons roughly multiply by 6 and divide by 5. To convert precisely multiply by 1.201. To convert U.S. gallons to Imperial gallons roughly multiply by 5 and divide by 6. To convert precisely multiply by 0.833.

Gallup Poll

Gambia

Not the Gambia, West Africa.

gambit

Not simply an opening move (in chess or metaphorically) but one that involves a sacrifice or concession. Opening gambit is tautological.

Gandhi

Not Ghandi.

gantlet, gauntlet

Use gantlet for the military punishment ' running the gantlet', gauntlet for an iron glove.

gaol

Use jail.

gas

gases, gassing, gassed. The American gasoline, meaning motor fuel, is referred to as petrol in Europe. Do not use gas as a synonym for gasoline; it could cause ambiguity.

gay

The word is now universally used as a synonym for homosexual. Do not use it in other senses.

gearing

An indicator of a company's ability to service its debt. Explain if used in financial stories, but best avoided. See glossary of financial terms.

GDP

See gross domestic product.

Geneva Conventions

Plural.

gender

Do not use language that perpetuates sexual, racial, religious or other stereotypes. Such language is offensive, out of date and often simply inaccurate. A person's gender, race, religion, nationality, sexual orientation or marital status should not be cited unless it is relevant to the story. Even then, consideration must be given to where in the story such information needs to be placed. It is wrong to assume that police, firefighters or soldiers are men. Police is shorter than policemen anyway. Do not describe a woman's dress or hairstyle where you would not describe a man's. Where possible use the same term for men and women, e.g. mayor or poet, not mayoress or poetess. Use chairman, chairwoman not chair; spokesman, spokeswoman not spokesperson.

general

Military ranks should never be abbreviated and should be capitalised when referring to a specific individual. In general, ranks in the armed forces of the main English-speaking countries such as the United States, Britain and Australia are not hyphenated, eg Lieutenant Colonel, Rear Admiral, Air Chief Marshal. However, there are exceptions, such as Canada and India,. which hyphenate their titles and we should follow the local practice. At second and subsequent reference, use the surname OR his or her rank, eg Major General John Brown becomes either Brown or the general (not the major general). Ranks in the non-English-speaking world should be translated without hyphens. In the U.S. Army, a brigadier-general has one star, a major-general two, a lieutenant general three and a general four. The British army has the rank of brigadier but not of brigadier general.

Gentile

Anyone not a Jew, or not a Mormon. Capitalise.

generation -- first/second

Take care when using to qualify to immigrants, since both terms are ambiguous. First-generation immigrants can mean either people who have immigrated, or the children of immigrants. Similarly, second-generation immigrants may be those whose parents immigrated, or whose grandparents did so.

geriatrics

Medical care of the elderly. The noun is geriatrics, the adjective geriatric. It does not mean just elderly.

Germany

The united Germany, like the former West Germany, is formally called the Federal Republic of Germany. Write East Germany when referring to the former Communist state but eastern or

western Germany when referring to the eastern and western parts of the unified Germany.

German spellings

Indicate the presence of an umlaut in German words by adding an e after the inflected vowel, e.g. von Weizsaecker not von Weizsacker, Fuehrer not Fuhrer

get, got

There is always a stronger verb. Find it and use it.

ghetto, ghetto.

GI, GIs

A U.S. soldier (from the term government issue). Use only in informal contexts.

giant

Do not use when describing companies. In general avoid this adjective.

gibe, gybe, jibe

A gibe is a taunt or sneer, to gybe is to swing a sail over or alter course, but in American style a gibe is a taunt or sneer, a jibe is to swing a sail over or alter course, or to be in accord or agree with.

Gibraltar, Strait of

Not Straits.

gilt-edge

Gipsy

See Gypsy

girl

Any female older than 18 is a woman not a girl. Use woman not lady. A male older than 18 is a man.

Girl Guides

Now simply Guides.

glamour, glamorous, glamorise

global

Beware of excessive use. Global is correct for the threat of global warming, i.e. something that affects the whole globe. However companies sometimes talk of their global network, an exaggeration unless they are represented in all the business centres on the globe. Try using world instead.

GMT – Greenwich Mean Time

As the international standard, it is not spelled out but should be capitalised. Western military forces use Zulu to mean GMT. It is only necessary to convert a local time into GMT, e.g. 8:30 a. m. (1330 GMT) when the Greenwich time is relevant to the rest of the world, such as the moment when an earthquake struck. The conversion should also be given when previewing important events or statements by major figures, e.g. Smith to hold news conference at 0800 EST (1300 GMT).

GNP

See gross national product.

goalkeeper

One word in sports reporting. Keeper may be used.

gobbledygook

go-between

God

Capitalise when referring to the God of any monotheistic religion. Lower case any pronoun references. Lower case gods and goddesses for polytheistic religions.

godchild, goddaughter, godfather, godmother, godparents

Lower case, no hyphen. Similarly with godsend and godspeed.

Godthaab

Use Nuuk, Greenland.

going public

The term for a privately owned company that seeks a listing on a stock exchange and issues shares to the general public. Also known as a flotation or as issuing an IPO.

golden share

A share that confers sufficient voting rights in a company to maintain control and protect it from takeover.

Golden Week

A series of Japanese national holidays from late April to early May. Starts with Greenery Day on April 29 and ends with Children’s Day on May 5. Avoid calling it holiday-studded. Write in quotes as “Golden Week” in headlines and at first reference in the text and then without the quotes.

good, bad

For financial and commodity markets good news and bad news depends on who you are and what your position is in the market. Avoid them.

goodbye

Not good bye or goodby.

goodwill

Noun and adjective.

gorilla

Gorilla is the animal. Guerrilla, not guerilla, is a member of a small band of independent fighers which harasses an army.

gourmand, gourmet

A gourmand is a glutton, a gourmet an epicure.

Gospel

Capitalise for a specific reference to the books of the New Testament, the Gospels, the Gospel of St Luke. Lower case for gospel music.

governance

Other than in the expression corporate governance, meaning the rules governing the conduct of companies' affairs, this is often used to mean simply government, which is preferable.

Government Accountability Office (U.S.)

Formerly the General Accounting Office .Can be abbreviated to GAO in headlines or at second reference.

governor-general, governors-general

Note hyphen

graffiti

Scribbling on a wall. This is a plural noun. The singular is graffito.

gram

Not gramme. For kilogram use kg (no full stop, same singular and plural) at all references. Convert to ounces for weights up to 400 grams, to pounds for larger weights. To convert to ounces roughly

divide grams by 30, precisely multiply by 0.035. To convert grams to pounds roughly multiply by two and divide by 900, precisely multiply by 0.0022.

grammar

a, an: Use a before a word that begins with the sound of a consonant, e.g. a gun, a historian, a hotel, a hysterectomy, a NATO member, a one-armed man, a U.N. member. Use an before a word that begins with the sound of a vowel, e.g. an heir, an honour, an OPEC member.

adjectives: Use them sparingly. Avoid adjectives that imply a Reuters judgment, e.g. a hard-line speech, a glowing tribute, a staunch conservative. Some people might consider the speech moderate, the tribute fulsome or the conservative a die-hard reactionary. When using an adjective and a noun together as an adjective, hyphenate them, e.g. a blue-chip share, high-caste Hindus. When using an adjective and the past participle of a verb together adjectivally, hyphenate them, e.g. old-fashioned morality, rose-tinted spectacles. Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. The artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do this if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

adverbs: Put the adverb between the auxiliary verb and the past participle, e.g. France has already refused... not France already has refused ...as, like: as compares verbs, like compares nouns. He fought as a hero should. But: He acted like a hero.

collective nouns: Most collective nouns and names of countries, governments, organisations and companies are followed by singular verbs and singular neuter pronouns, e.g. The government, which is studying the problem, said it... not The government, who are studying the problem, said they.. Exceptions are the police (police are), the couple (the couple are), and sports stories, teams take plural verbs and pronouns.

neither: Used on its own it always takes a singular verb. Neither is available.

neither ... nor: Can govern only two elements e.g. Neither Norway nor Sweden voted. Do not write Neither Norway, Sweden nor Denmark voted. If both elements are singular use a singular verb, e.g. Neither France nor Germany welcomes the prospect. If one element is singular and one plural then the verb agrees with the noun nearest to it. e.g. Neither the players nor the referee is fit. Neither Joe nor his parents were able to come. Always use neither ... nor… Do not use neither…or. Always use not ... or. Do not use not…nor.

participles: There are cases in which an unattached participle is acceptable, e.g. Considering the risks involved, you were right to cancel the trip. Although it is not you who is considering the risks but the writer of the sentence, the sense is clear. But avoid the unattached participle when it makes the sentence absurd, e.g.: Having disarmed, Ruritania’s allies guaranteed its defence. Here the participle having disarmed is wrongly attached to the allies when in fact it is Ruritania that has disarmed. Fetching anything between $16,000 and $40,000, only about 2,500 women around the world can afford to buy haute couture dresses. The juxtaposition of fetching and women suggests it is the women not the dresses who are worth $16,000.

split infinitive: Avoid splitting infinitives unless the alternative is an unnatural word order. The president vowed to ruthlessly crush all armed opposition reads better than ruthlessly to crush or to

crush ruthlessly.

that, which: Use that in defining clauses, e.g. the cup that cheers. Reserve which for informative clauses, e.g. the cup, which was blue, was full of water. Avoid the unnecessary use of that as in He said that he was going to ...

who, whom: who is the subject, whom the object of a verb. As a rough guide as to which word to use, substitute he or him for the who or whom and see which makes sense. But we should follow common usage and be ready to use who as the object where this sounds and looks more natural, e.g. Who she met at the midnight rendezvous was not yet known.

granddad, granddaughter

Similarly grandmother, grandfather, grandson.

grand jury

In the U.S. judicial system a grand jury's main function is to review evidence presented by a prosecutor and determine whether there is probable cause to return an indictment. Under the constitution, a grand jury indictment is required for federal criminal charges. Only about half of the states' judicial systems use grand juries. See U.S. courts

Grand Prix

Capitalise in the title of a race or event, e.g. Monaco Grand Prix, but lower case generally, e.g. Michael Schumacher won his first grand prix. The plural is grands prix.

grand slam

Lower case in description of tennis tournaments.

grass court

Two words as an adjective plus noun, e.g. Wimbledon’s grass courts are famous, but one word as an adjective, grasscourt tournament.

Great Britain

Comprises England, Scotland and Wales. The United Kingdom comprises Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In sports reporting use Britain. See United Kingdom

great-

Hyphenate great-grandfather, great-grandmother, great-great-grandson etc.

grey, but gray in American style

grievous

grisly, grizzly

grisly means ghastly, grizzly means grey-haired. A grizzly is also a kind of North American bear.

gross domestic product

May be expressed as GDP in a headline and at first reference, but copy should spell out the full explanantion at second reference. It is the total monetary value of all goods and services produced within a country. GDP does not include income from overseas investments and earnings or from remittances from nationals working abroad. Use in preference to GNP. Usually referred to in the context of GDP growth in percent. Often just called economic growth, but this term needs to be spelled out. GDP per capita may be used to compare countries.

ground rules

Rules that apply in particular circumstances, not general or basic rules.

gross national product

The total value of goods and services produced by an economy, including income from overseas investments and remittances from nationals working abroad.

grovel, grovelled

grow

Farmers grow crops. Companies do not grow revenues.

gruelling

A cliche best avoided.

guerrilla, gorilla

Guerrilla, not guerilla, is a member of a small band of independent fighters which harasses an army. Gorilla is the animal.

guest

Do not use as a verb.

Gulf

Use for the Middle East Gulf. Do not use Arabian or Persian Gulf. Write the Gulf of Mexico in full at first reference.

gully, not gulley

Cricket fielding position.

gunwale

Gurkha

guttural

Gypsy

Do not use when referring to the Roma people. See Roma. Do not capitalise when used generically to describe someone who is constantly on the move, e.g. She led the life of a gypsy.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 11:42, 28 March 2011.

H

Contents

- 1 Haarlem, Harlem
- 2 habeas corpus
- 3 Habsburg
- 4 Haiti
- 5 hale, hail
- 6 half
- 7 half-mast
- 8 haj
- 9 haji
- 10 halftime
- 11 hallelujah
- 12 Halley's comet
- 13 halo, halos
- 14 hands off
- 15 Hamas
- 16 Hamilton
- 17 hang
- 18 hangar, hanger
- 19 hara-kiri
- 20 harass, harassment
- 21 hard court
- 22 hard fought
- 23 hardline, hardliner
- 24 hat-trick
- 25 H-bomb
- 26 head of state
- 27 headroom
- 28 healthcare
- 29 hedge fund
- 30 heavenly bodies
- 31 hectare
- 32 heights
- 33 hemorrhage
- 34 hemorrhoid
- 35 here
- 36 heroin
- 37 hertz
- 38 Hezbollah
- 39 hiccup
- 40 HICP
- 41 hi-fi
- 42 high-tech
- 43 high commission
- 44 hike
- 45 hint
- 46 hippie

- 47 Hispanic
- 48 Hispanic names
- 49 Hispaniola
- 50 historic, historical
- 51 hit by
- 52 hitchhike, hitchhiker
- 53 Hitler
- 54 HIV
- 55 Hizbollah
- 56 hoard, horde
- 57 hoary
- 58 Hobson's choice
- 59 hoi polloi
- 60 Holland
- 61 holocaust
- 62 Holy Places
- 63 homemade
- 64 homemaker
- 65 homeopathy
- 66 home schooling
- 67 hometown
- 68 homosexual
- 69 honorifics
- 70 hoof-and-mouth
- 71 hopefully
- 72 horde, hoard
- 73 hospitalise, hospitalisation
- 74 host
- 75 hostile bid
- 76 hot spot
- 77 House of Commons, the Commons
- 78 House of Representatives
- 79 housing unit
- 80 human being
- 81 humorist
- 82 hundredweight
- 83 hung
- 84 hurricanes
- 85 hyphenation
- 86 hydro
- 87 hyperthermia
- 88 hypothermia

Haarlem, Harlem

Haarlem is in the Netherlands, Harlem in New York City.

habeas corpus

A writ to produce a prisoner before a court, usually used to establish whether the person's detention is legal . When used in stories, define its meaning.

Habsburg

Haiti

Not an island. It shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.

hale, hail

Hale is free from disease, or to pull or haul by force. Hail is to salute or call out, or an ice shower. Hail a cab. A person is hale and hearty.

half

Note the following: halfhearted, halftrack; half brother, half size; half-baked, half-cocked, half-hour, half-life, half-moon, half-truth.

half-mast

Hyphenate. Strict military protocol distinguishes between half-mast for ships and naval stations and half-staff for other uses on land.

haj

Not hadj or hajj. The Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca.

haji

Someone who has performed the haj.

halftime

One word

hallelujah

Halley's comet

Lower case "c"

halo, halos

hands off

Hyphenate when a compound modifier. She adopted a hands-off policy and kept her hands off decisions.

Hamas

Refer to it as the Islamist Hamas movement. Suggest we include following in most stories on Hamas: Its leaders have offered a long-term truce with Israel in return for a viable Palestinian state in the occupied West Bank and the Gaza Strip. The Islamist group continues to say it will not formally recognise Israel and its 1988 founding charter calls for the destruction of the Jewish state.

Hamilton

Use the form HAMILTON, Bermuda as a dateline for the Bermudan capital.

hang

A person is hanged, a picture is hung.

hangar, hanger

hangar is a shelter for aircraft, a hanger for clothes

hara-kiri

Japanese ritual suicide. Not hari-kari.

harass, harassment

Not harrass. But embarrass.

hard court

The hard courts were designed for big servers, but one word as an adjective, e.g. hardcourt tournament.

hard fought

Avoid this cliche in sports reporting. Most competitive matches are hard fought and it is a story if they are not.

hardline, hardliner

Spell as one word, without hyphen.

hat-trick

Hyphenated.

H-bomb

Use hydrogen bomb in text unless directly quoting someone. May be used in headlines.

head of state

Be careful, it is not always the prime minister.

headroom

One word.

healthcare

One word.

hedge fund

A private investment fund in which institutions and individuals may invest. It typically aims to produce high returns from rapid, short-term market movements, often by taking very leveraged positions and using aggressive strategies such as short selling, swaps, derivatives, program trading and arbitrage.

heavenly bodies

Capitalise the names of planets, stars and constellations.

hectare

To convert to acres roughly multiply by five and divide by two, precisely multiply by 2.471.

heights

Convert the heights of mountains, buildings, etc. from metres to feet, not yards.

hemorrhage

Prefer bleeding.

hemorrhoid

here

Avoid using here as a device to locate a story. It can lead to confusion, ambiguity and sometimes error. It is often not necessary to give a locator in a lead paragraph. For instance, in a Budapest-datelined story on a meeting between the Hungarian and French presidents one would assume that they met in the capital unless the story explicitly said otherwise. In that case the reference to the talks being in Budapest could come in the second or third paragraph.

heroin

hertz

A unit of frequency of one cycle per second. It usually requires explanation. e.g. 16,000 hertz (cycles per second).

Hezbollah

A Shi'ite Islamist group in Lebanon that is backed by Syria and Iran. It is a political party with a formidable guerrilla army.

hiccup

HICP

Harmonised index of consumer prices, a measure of inflation calculated under common rules by all EU member states. In Britain, the HICP is known as the CPI, but the two are the same index.

hi-fi

high-tech

Not hi-tech. Use as adjective only. As a noun write high-technology.

high commission

Lower case except when specific: British High Commission.

hike

Use rise or increase when referring to pay, prices, etc. "Hike" is jargon.

hint

Do not use this inadequate word because it risks making a value judgment. Who said what and where and when?

hippie

Not hippy. A rebel against conventional standards and values.

Hispanic

As a noun or adjective refers to those whose ethnic origin is in a Spanish-speaking country. Be more specific where possible, such as Colombian or Mexican. Note that people from

Portuguese-speaking countries are not Hispanic. See race

Hispanic names

People in Spanish-speaking countries usually include in their full names the family name of their father followed by that of their mother, sometimes linked by y (and), e.g. Ferdinand Maradona Lopez, Pedro Ardiles y Portillo.

Give the full name at first reference, but only the father's family name (Maradona, Ardiles) at second reference, unless the person is normally known by the combination of two names. Portuguese, Spanish and Brazilian soccer players may be known by several names, one name, or a nickname. Follow commonly accepted usage e.g. Pele, Joao Pinto, Edu.

Hispaniola

A Caribbean island shared by Haiti and the Dominican Republic.

historic, historical

A historic event is a major and dramatic one, a historical event is one which, even if in itself quite minor, is part of history. Historic is nearly always the word needed in Reuters copy but use it with care to avoid writing a clichÃ©.

hit by

Do not use when you mean affected by.

hitchhike, hitchhiker

Hitler

First name was Adolf not Adolph. His title was Fuehrer (leader) not Fuhrer.

HIV

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome is caused by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). The term AIDS applies to the most advanced stages of HIV infection. The initials AIDS and HIV may be used at first reference with the full name given lower in the story. Do not write HIV virus.

Hizbollah

Do not use. See Hezbollah

hoard, horde

A hoard is a hidden stock or treasure, a horde a multitude.

hoary

Not hoarey, for something ancient or white with age.

Hobson's choice

Not the lesser of two evils, but no choice at all.

hoi polloi

Not the hoi polloi. Prefer the masses, or the common people.

Holland

Use the Netherlands except in datelines, where it is just Netherlands, e.g. ARNHEM, Netherlands, May 16 …

holocaust

Wholesale slaughter or destruction by fire. Capitalise when referring to the Nazi massacre of European Jewry.

Holy Places

The Holy Places of Islam are Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, in that order. In Mecca the great mosque containing the Kaaba is venerated especially in the annual haj, or pilgrimage. In Medina it is the Prophet Mohammad’s mosque where the founder of the Islamic religion is buried. Non-believers are not allowed to enter Mecca or Medina. In Jerusalem it is al-Haram al-Sharif, which Jews call the Temple Mount.

homemade

One word.

homemaker

One word.

homeopathy

Not homoeopathy.

home schooling

Two words, but hypehnate home-schooled and home-schooler.

hometown

One word.

homosexual

The word applies to both men and women, not just to men. Therefore do not write homosexuals and lesbians, although you can refer to homosexual men and women.

honorifics

See courtesy titles, nobility, religious titles, royalty.

hoof-and-mouth

Use foot-and-mouth.

hopefully

Except in quotation do not use to mean it is hoped that …

horde, hoard

A horde is a multitude, a hoard is a hidden stock or treasure.

hospitalise, hospitalisation

Do not use. Prefer taken to hospital or treated in hospital. On most occasions drop the reference because seriously ill or injured people are usually treated in hospital.

host

Acceptable as a verb.

hostile bid

A bid for a company that is not supported by its senior management.

hot spot

Two words: an area that has wireless computer connectivity, a global trouble spot or a point of intense heat in a fire.

House of Commons, the Commons

House of Representatives

Capitalise when referring to a specific body e.g. the U.S. House of Representatives.

housing unit

Jargon. Use home or household.

human being

Just human will do.

humorist

hundredweight

UK/U.S. long = 112 pounds/50.8 kg. U.S. short = 100 pounds/45.4 kg.

hung

A person is hanged, a picture is hung.

hurricanes

The most severe of all storms is a cyclone, in which winds blow spirally inwards towards a centre of low barometric pressure. In the Caribbean and on the East Coast of the United States such a storm is called a hurricane. In many countries meteorological offices give tropical storms the names of men and women in alphabetical sequence. Capitalise names once a hurricane has been so designated: Hurricane Katrina. Use it, not he or she, as the pronoun.

hyphenation

Use a hyphen if its omission might lead to ambiguity, e.g. three year-old horses is quite different from three-year-old horses. Use caution in headlines: False jailing claim delayed. What was meant was False-jailing claim delayed.

Hyphens tend to erode with time and many words once hyphenated are now generally written unhyphenated e.g. ceasefire, cooperation, gunrunner, machinegun.

Use a hyphen to show that two or more words are to be read together as a single word with its own meaning, different from that of the individual words, e.g. extra-judicial duties (duties other than judicial ones) as opposed to extra judicial duties (additional judicial duties).

Do not hyphenate an adjective and a noun when they stand alone, e.g. the left wing of the party. If the adjective and noun are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a first-class result, the left-wing party. Hyphenate numbers and nouns or adjectives when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a six-cylinder car, a one-armed man. Do not hyphenate adjectives used to form comparatives or superlatives, e.g. the most desirable outcome, the least likely result, the more obvious solution.

Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. The artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do so however if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

Hyphenate two adjectives or an adjective and a present or past participle when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a dark-blue dress, a good-looking man, a well-tailored suit.

Do not hyphenate very with an adjective. He is a very good man.

If the second element in a word is capitalised, hyphenate. Transatlantic is an exception.

If pre- or re- is followed by an element beginning with e, hyphenate e.g. pre-empt, re-employ.

If the first element of a word is the negative non-, hyphenate, e.g. a non-aggression pact (but nonconformist).

Where two nouns are paired to form another noun, hyphenate if their original distinct meanings are still clearly retained, e.g. actor-manager. Otherwise do not hyphenate, e.g. housekeeper.

Where a verb and adverb are paired to form a noun, hyphenate if the verb ends and the adverb begins with a vowel, e.g. cave-in, flare-up.

Hyphenate titles when the first word is a preposition, e.g. under-secretary, vice-admiral, or when a noun is followed by an adjective, e.g. attorney-general. (However official U.S. titles are not hyphenated, e.g. the US. Attorney General.) Do not hyphenate when the noun follows the adjective, e.g. second lieutenant.

Hyphenate fractions, e.g. three-quarter, two-thirds.

Hyphenate secondary compass points, e.g. south-southwest but not main ones e.g. southwest.

Hyphenate compound words when not to do so would result in an ugly sound or confusion of meaning, e.g. cross-section, sea-eagle.

Hyphenate both terms in phrases such as short- and medium-range missiles. If a figure being converted is hyphenated make sure that the figure in the conversion is also, e.g. within a 10-mile (six-km) radius.

hydro

In general, no hyphen e.g. hydroelectric.

hyperthermia

Too hot. Think of '–er' as in very.

hypothermia

Too cold. Think that o rhymes with low.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:45, 20 July 2009.

I

Contents

- 1 IAEA
- 2 IATA
- 3 ibn
- 4 ICAO
- 5 ice age
- 6 ICBM
- 7 ICO
- 8 icon
- 9 ICRC
- 10 Id al-Adha, Id al-Fitr
- 11 idiosyncrasy, idiosyncrasies
- 12 IFC
- 13 ill
- 14 illegal immigrant
- 15 IISS
- 16 illicit
- 17 illiquid
- 18 illusion
- 19 ILO
- 20 imam
- 21 IMCO
- 22 IMF
- 23 immigrate
- 24 IMO
- 25 impacted by
- 26 impassable
- 27 impassible/impassive
- 28 impeachment
- 29 imply, infer
- 30 important
- 31 imports from abroad
- 32 impostor
- 33 impresario
- 34 impress
- 35 in addition to
- 36 in, into
- 37 inadmissible
- 38 inasmuch as
- 39 in connection with
- 40 insofar as
- 41 in the past
- 42 inch
- 43 include, comprise
- 44 incredible, incredulous

- 45 incur, incurring, incurred
- 46 Index, indexes
- 47 Indians (U.S.)
- 48 indicated
- 49 indict
- 50 indirect speech
- 51 indiscriminate, indiscriminately
- 52 indispensable
- 53 Indochina
- 54 Indonesian names
- 55 indoor, indoors
- 56 industrial action
- 57 in fact
- 58 infant
- 59 infer
- 60 inflation
- 61 inimitable
- 62 injuries, wounds
- 63 innocent
- 64 innocuous
- 65 inoculate
- 66 in order to
- 67 inquire, inquiry
- 68 inpatient
- 69 insignia
- 70 insolvency
- 71 install
- 72 instil, instilled
- 73 instinctive, instinctual
- 74 in spite of
- 75 insure
- 76 international community
- 77 International Court of Justice
- 78 International Criminal Court
- 79 international date line
- 80 internecine
- 81 Internet
- 82 Interpol
- 83 interpretative
- 84 interval
- 85 Intifada
- 86 into
- 87 intranet
- 88 Inuit
- 89 invariably

- 90 inveigh, inveigle
- 91 invoke, evoke
- 92 IOC
- 93 IOM
- 94 IRA
- 95 irascible
- 96 Ireland
- 97 Irian Jaya
- 98 ironically
- 99 irregardless
- 100 irreparable
- 101 -isation, -zation
- 102 **-ization, -isation
- 103 -ise, -ize
- 104 Islam
- 105 Islamic
- 106 Islamist
- 107 Islamisation
- 108 Israeli names
- 109 it
- 110 its, it’s

IAEA

International Atomic Energy Agency (Vienna). The U.N. nuclear watchdog. See www.iaea.org

IATA

International Air Transport Association (Geneva). See www.iata.org

ibn

Use bin in Arab names to mean son of.

ICAO

International Civil Aviation Organisation (Montreal). See www.icao.int

ice age

Lower case.

ICBM

Intercontinental ballistic missile with a range of about 3,500 miles.

ICO

Organisation of the Islamic Conference. Use OIC. See www.oic-cio.org

icon

Best used only to describe a religious image.

ICRC

International Committee of the Red Cross (Geneva). See Red Cross and www.icrc.org

Id al-Adha, Id al-Fitr

See Eid al-Adha, Eid al-Fitr

idiosyncrasy, idiosyncrasies

IFC

International Finance Corporation, private sector financing arm of the World Bank, based in Washington. See www.ifc.org

ill

Hyphenate in compounds e.g. ill-mannered, ill-tempered.

illegal immigrant

Not illegal alien.

IISS

International Institute for Strategic Studies (London).

illicit

Elicit is to draw forth or to evoke. Illicit is not permitted or illegal. A dalliance may elicit an illicit relationship.

illiquid

Markets or instruments are described as being illiquid, or lacking depth, if there is a shortage of buyers or sellers. This shortage makes is difficult to find a true price for an illiquid security. The opposite of liquid.

illusion

Allusion is a reference in passing. Illusion is a false impression or a delusion.

ILO

International Labour Organization (Geneva). See www.ilo.org

imam

Lower case when describing the official who leads devotions in a mosque. Upper case when part of an official title.

IMCO

Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organisation (London), succeeded by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). See below.

IMF

International Monetary Fund (Washington). A specialised agency of the U.N. which has a brief to oversee the international monetary system. The IMF provides funds to member countries with balance of payments problems, to support policies of adjustment and reform. Its main units are the policy-making International Monetary and Financial Committee and the jopint IMF-World Bank Development Committee that usually meet twice a year. Its funds come from subscriptions from member states. See www.imf.org

immigrate

IMO

The International Maritime Organization, the U.N. specialised agency responsible for improving maritime safety, preventing pollution from ships and promoting technical co-operation. See www.imo.org

impacted by

Ugly and imprecise. Use affected by, or better helped by or hurt by. Similarly, avoid impacted on and replace with affected, helped, hurt etc.

impassable

Meaning passage is impossible. Not impassible.

impassible/impassive

Both mean insensitive to pain or suffering. Do not confuse with "impassable" (see above).

impeachment

In the United States, the process of bringing an official before a court or tribunal on charges of wrongdoing, in an attempt to remove him or her from office. Not the same as being convicted or removed from office.

imply, infer

A speaker or writer implies by insinuating or suggesting indirectly. A listener or reader infers by drawing a conclusion from what is said.

important

Specify to whom.

imports from abroad

A tautology. Just imports will do.

impostor

impresario

impress

A transitive verb that requires an object. Jim Smith impressed selectors, not Smith impressed during his two-hour innings. The passive, was impressive /unimpressive, is permissible but weaker and less informative.

in addition to

Just 'and' will often suffice, or as well as or besides. Similarly, in order to can become 'to'.

in, into

In shows place, into shows movement. He was in the square when the soldiers marched into the town. Into is one word, on to is two.

inadmissible

inasmuch as

in connection with

Clumsy and inexact. Did something happen because of something else?

insofar as

in the past

Often redundant when used with the past tense. An exception might be a reference to the very distant past.

inch

To convert to centimetres roughly multiply by 5 and divide by 2, precisely multiply by 2.54.

include, comprise

Use include only when listing some component parts of a whole: The European Union includes Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. If listing all the components use comprise: Benelux comprises Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg.

incredible, incredulous

Incredible is unbelievable, incredulous is sceptical.

incur, incurring, incurred

Index, indexes

Use indexes as the plural.

Indians (U.S.)

Native American (capitalised) is preferred, bearing in mind that this includes e.g. Inuit who are not Indians. American Indian is acceptable. Where possible, be more specific and give the name of the tribe (eg. Navajo, Cherokee). See race

indicated

Best avoided because it implies subjective interpretation by the correspondent.

indict

Avoid the suggestion that somebody is being judged without trial. Indicted on a charge of robbing, not indicted for robbing.

indirect speech

Do not retain the present indicative in indirect or reported speech. Change is to was; are to were; will and shall to would; has and have to had. Thus it is: He said it was ... not he said it is ... There is an exception in the case of lead paragraphs with the source at the end instead of the beginning of the sentence, where to avoid the present indicative would lead to lack of clarity or smack of pedantry. For example, it is acceptable to write in a lead paragraph: Giant Oil Corp will order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard in Korea next month, the company said. If the source were at the beginning, we would write: Giant Oil Corp said it would order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard ... It is usually unnecessary to follow said with that.

indiscriminate, indiscriminately

indispensable

Indochina

No longer used. Now Cambodia, Laos and Vietnam.

Indonesian names

Often Indonesians only have one name e.g. Suharto.

indoor, indoors

Indoor is the adjective, indoors is the adverb. He stayed indoors to let off the indoor firework.

industrial action

Avoid this euphemism. If you mean a strike, say so. If you do not mean a strike, then be specific.

in fact

Can almost always be excised.

infant

Child up to 12 months old.

infer

A speaker or writer implies by insinuating or suggesting indirectly. A listener or reader infers by drawing a conclusion from what is said.

inflation

A persistent rise in the prices of goods and services, caused by too much money chasing too few goods. Inflation can be caused by an increase in money supply or demand as a result of government spending or the printing of money, or by a contraction in the supply of goods. Demand-pull inflation is caused by excess demand in the economy, while cost-push inflation is

caused by increased costs of production. The rate of inflation is often a primary policy target of governments, and of central banks given policy independence to achieve a target rate.

inimitable

injuries, wounds

Wounds are suffered in combat or are inflicted by weapons or war, injuries by accident or criminal attack. Be as specific as possible, e.g. His right leg was broken not His leg was broken. Write His left arm was broken not He suffered an arm fracture. Use suffered rather than sustained or received. Avoid hospitalise as a verb.

innocent

Report a plea or a verdict as it was made in court. If it was not guilty, do not report it as innocent.

innocuous

inoculate

in order to

As a prepositional phrase, just 'to' will do.

inquire, inquiry

inpatient

One word.

Not enquire, enquiry.

insignia

Strictly a plural noun but can be treated as singular as well. Each of the guilds had an insignia.

insolvency

See bankruptcy.

install

Not instal. Installation but instalment.

instil, instilled

Instillation but instilment.

instinctive, instinctual

Instinctive is prompted by instinct, instinctual is belonging to or related to instincts.

in spite of

Use despite.

insure

Insure means to guarantee against loss, ensure to make sure.

international community

Avoid unless it clearly refers to the body of global diplomatic opinion. Be specific, as in the United States and its allies, or Muslim countries

International Court of Justice

This is the proper title of the World Court in The Hague, which is the main U. N. judicial body. Use the term World Court at second reference. The Court has a dual role: to settle international legal disputes submitted to it by states, and to give advisory opinions on legal questions referred to it by international agencies.

International Criminal Court

The court set up in The Hague under the auspices of the United Nations to try crimes such as genocide.

international date line

Lower case.

internecine

Internecine means deadly or murderous as well as conflict within a group. Internecine warfare is tautologous.

Internet

A global data communications system comprising hardware and software that connects computers. The World Wide Web consists of content accessed using the Internet and is not synonymous with it. It is a collection of documents and other resources linked by hyperlinks, or URLs. The Internet also carries, for example, email and downloadable software.

Capitalise as a noun, lower case as an adjective e.g. internet banking, internet cafe.

Interpol

The International Criminal Police Organisation (Lyon. France). Interpol can be used at all references.

interpretative

interval

An interval is the time between two events. Do not use it to mean simply elapsed time. He studied for an interval of three years is wrong. 'An interval of' can be excised. There was an interval of a year between his two degrees is right.

Intifada

Arabic for “uprising”. It is used to describe two Palestinian uprisings against Israeli occupation. The first began in December 1987 and ran roughly until September 1993 when leaders signed an interim accord under which Israel handed over parts of the West Bank and Gaza Strip to Palestinian self-rule. A second Intifada began in September 2000. Capitalise.

into

one word. On to, two words.

intranet

Lower case.

Inuit

The name used by the people of northern Canada to describe themselves. There are about 56,000 Inuit who live in an area from Labrador to Alaska. The singular is Inuk, the language is Inuktitut.

invariably

Means fixed and without exception, not usual or frequent or commonly. Invariably the children catch colds is wrong. Invariably spring follows winter.

inveigh, inveigle

Inveigh is to revile or to attack with words. Inveigle is to entice, cajole or wheedle.

invoke, evoke

Invoke means to call upon solemnly, evoke to bring to mind, e.g. In a speech evoking memories of the civil war he invoked God's help in preventing fresh bloodshed.

IOC

International Olympic Committee (Lausanne). See www.ioc.org

IOM

International Organization for Migration (Geneva). This is a non-U.N. intergovernmental agency whose main task is to move refugees and migrants to new homes. See www.iom.int

IRA

Irish Republican Army. May be used alone at first reference from a dateline in the British Isles. If the full name is used at first reference, the initials need not be bracketed in.

irascible

Not irrascible.

Ireland

Do not use Eire for the Republic of Ireland. See also Northern Ireland.

Irian Jaya

Indonesian province now known as Papua. It borders Papua New Guinea

ironically

Use only rarely and with the greatest care. The word has several meanings and most are misunderstood and misapplied.

irregardless

This is a double negative. Use regardless.

irreparable

-isation, -zation

For stories outside the Americas when there is a choice between -isation and –ization for a noun ending use -isation.

**-ization, -isation

For stories in the Americas when there is a choice between -ization and –isation for a noun ending use –ization. (American style)

-ise, -ize

For stories outside the Americas when there is a choice between -ise and -ize for a verb ending use -ise. Bust stories in the Americas when there is a choice between-ize and –ise for a verb ending use –ize. (American style)

Islam

Religion practised by Muslims.

Islamic

Similar to Muslim as an adjective; often used more widely to describe architecture, art, banking, culture, law etc. An Islamic state is a country ruled by Islamic law (sharia). A Muslim country is one whose population is predominantly Muslim.

Islamist

A person or organisation advocating a political ideology based on Islam. Islamist is not a pejorative term. Only some Islamists advocate violence to achieve their goals. Describe these as militant Islamists.

Islamisation

Not Islamicisation. The word should be explained with a phrase, depending on context, such as the imposition of Islamic law (sharia).

Israeli names

Use ch rather than h in transliterating Israeli names into English, e.g. Chaim not Haim. Use the h form only if we know it is the individual's personal preference.

it

Use the pronoun it rather than she when referring to ships.

its, it's

The possessive pronoun has no apostrophe, unlike the contraction it's meaning it is. Avoid the contraction unless quoting someone. Its as a possessive pronoun is often superfluous, e.g. The company is trying to reduce its debt and plans to sell its less-profitable assets.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 10:09, 27 April 2011.

J

Contents

- 1 Jacuzzi
- 2 jail, jailer
- 3 Japanese legal system
- 4 jargon
- 5 Jeddah
- 6 jeep, Jeep
- 7 Jerusalem
- 8 Jesus Christ
- 9 jets
- 10 Jew
- 11 jibe
- 12 jihad
- 13 Jihadi, jihadist
- 14 Jittery
- 15 jodhpurs
- 16 John F. Kennedy Space Center
- 17 join together
- 18 Journalese
- 19 judgment, not judgement.
- 20 judo, ju-jitsu
- 21 jumbo jet
- 22 junkie
- 23 junta
- 24 jury
- 25 just deserts
- 26 justify

Jacuzzi

The registered name of a brand of whirlpool prducts. Use whirlpool bath.

jail, jailer

Not gaol, gaoler. In the United States, a jail is where a prisoner is held while serving a sentence for a misdemeanour, punishable by a sentence of a year or less, or while awaiting trial or sentencing. Prison is where a person convicted of a felony, a more serious crime punishable by more than a year's detention, serves a sentence.

Japanese legal system

Libel and slander laws in Japan are vague. Police confirmation of criminal investigations is rare, except for leaks to an exclusive police agency press club from which foreign media are excluded. Reuters pickups of Japanese media reports would probably not be actionable in Japan but they could be the subject of action in other countries with stricter rules if the plaintiff had a reputation that could be damaged abroad. Suspects in Japan can be held for as long as 48 hours before a formal arrest warrant is issued.

The suspect can then be held for a further 72 hours until a prosecutor decides whether there is enough evidence to lay charges. It can then take up to 20 more days before an indictment is obtained.

jargon

Jargon is specialised language unfamiliar to the average reader, e.g. remuneration, de-escalation, methodology, going forward, thought leadership, downside risks. If you have to convert into better English a word such as confrontation, use the most conservative of its various meanings. Beware the language used by financial professionals. Political and military jargon is riddled with euphemisms to conceal meaning. Unless you are directly quoting someone, turn jargon into clear English. Journalism jargon -- newsflow, obits, stringers, paras, rejigs -- should not appear in our stories. Words like obituary should be written in full

Jeddah

Not Jedda or Jiddah, Saudi Arabia.

jeep, Jeep

Lower case for a military vehicle. Upper case for the brand of civilian vehicle.

Jerusalem

Israelis and Arabs dispute the status of the city. Israel regards Jerusalem as its "eternal and indivisible" capital but that is not recognised internationally. Palestinians want to have the capital of an eventual Palestinian state there. Do not use it as a synonym for Israel, as in the Jerusalem government.

Jesus Christ

Be careful using Christ because it is a theological term for Messiah, a title non-Christians would not give him. The combination Jesus Christ is so well know that in most general stories, we can use it on first reference and Jesus after that. Christ on second reference should be limited to strictly Christian theological contexts (see Christ). Using Jesus Christ would not be appropriate in a story about Jewish views of Jesus. In a story about Muslims discussing him, use Jesus Christ only if they do. In no case should we refer to him only as Christ on second reference in general stories or in

headlines.

jets

Most modern airliners and military aircraft have jet engines. Do not use such terms as jet airliner or jetliner unless the fact that the aircraft is jet-powered is relevant. It would be more helpful to specify if an airliner or military aircraft is propeller driven.

Jew

Use for both men and women.

jibe

A gibe is a taunt or sneer, to gybe is to swing a sail over or alter course, but in American style a gibe is a taunt or sneer, a jibe is to swing a sail over or alter course, or to be in accord or agree with.

jihad

An Islamic holy war or struggle. It can also refer to individual's moral struggle. Use with extreme care.

Jihadi, jihadist

Do not use, except in quotes. Has become a loaded term.

Jittery

Use anxious or nervous or frightened.

jodhpurs

Not jodpurs.

John F. Kennedy Space Center

Florida, USA. Kennedy Space Center is an acceptable contraction. Mission control is usually at the Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, and Johnson Space Center is the acceptable contraction.

join together

Just join will do.

Journalese

Trite expressions to avoid:

Thumbs up

Green light

Gravy train

Salami tactics

The bottom line

Crisis

Ground-breaking

Guesstimate

Key

Landmark

Last-ditch

Magic bullet

Major, unless contrasted with something minor

Marathon (talks)

Massive

Meaningful

Oil-rich

Policy wonk

Perceptions

Prestigious

Significant

strongman

judgment, not judgement.

judo, ju-jitsu

judo is a modern form of ju-jitsu, Japanese wrestling.

jumbo jet

Loosely a large, wide-bodied airliner, specifically the Boeing 747.

junkie

Do not use for narcotics addict, unless in quotes.

junta

A political clique or a government formed by such a clique, usually after a revolution or coup.

jury

Singular. The jury has reached its decision.

just deserts

What you deserve, not desserts which you have for pudding.

justify

To defend. The prime minister tried to justify the decision, not the prime minister justified the decision.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 13:01, 22 July 2009.

K

Contents

- 1 Kaaba
- 2 Kampuchea, use Cambodia
- 3 karat
- 4 Kathmandu, not Katmandu, Nepal
- 5 keenness
- 6 Kermanshah
- 7 kerosene
- 8 ketchup, not catchup or catsup.
- 9 key
- 10 keynote
- 11 KGB
- 12 Khmer Rouge
- 13 kibbutz
- 14 kickoff, kick off
- 15 kidnap, kidnapping, kidnapped, kidnapper
- 16 kids
- 17 kilogram
- 18 kilometre
- 19 km per hour
- 20 kiloton
- 21 kindergarten
- 22 king
- 23 Kiribati
- 24 Kmart
- 25 Knesset
- 26 knowledgeable
- 27 know-how
- 28 knot
- 29 Kolkata
- 30 Koran
- 31 Korean names
- 32 kosher
- 33 kowtow
- 34 kph
- 35 Ku Klux Klan
- 36 kudos

Kaaba

Islam’s most sacred shrine at the centre of the great mosque in Mecca. It is a mass of stone 38 feet high, 40 long and 30 wide (11 x 12 x 9 metres).

Kampuchea, use Cambodia

karat

A measurement of weight in precious stones and of purity in gold in American style: carat in UK.

Kathmandu, not Katmandu, Nepal

keenness

Kermanshah

Use Bakhtaran for both the city of Kermanshah and the province of Kermanshah, Iran.

kerosene

Not kerosine. Medium-light distillate used for lighting and heating and to provide fuel for jet and turbo-prop aircraft engines. Called paraffin or paraffin oil in Britain.

ketchup, not catchup or catsup.

key

Overused as an adjective and usually superfluous.

keynote

One word as in keynote speech or keynote address, but it is a tired clichÃ© and best expressed in another way. Explain why the speech is keynote.

KGB

Initials of the former Soviet Committee for State Security (Komitet Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti), split up and renamed in 1991. Since then Russian internal and foreign security agencies have been reorganised several times but can still be referred to as successors to the KGB. This does not include the Interior Ministry in charge of the police, which was separate from the KGB in the post-Stalin Soviet Union.

Khmer Rouge

Cambodian Communists.

kibbutz

Plural kibbutzim. An Israeli collective settlement.

kickoff, kick off

One word for the noun and two words for the verb.

kidnap, kidnapping, kidnapped, kidnapper

kids

Use children

kilogram

Use kg (no full stop, same singular and plural) at all references. Convert kilograms to pounds for small weights (below 1,000 kg), to tons for larger weights. To convert to pounds roughly multiply by 22 and divide by 10, precisely multiply by 2.205. To convert to tons roughly divide by 1,000, precisely multiply by 0.000984.

kilometre

Use km (no full stop, same singular and plural) at all references, except in a phrase such as hundreds of kilometres. To convert to miles roughly multiply by 5 and divide by 8, precisely multiply by 0.621.

km per hour

First reference, kph on second and subsequent references.

kiloton

A measure of explosive force, equal to that of 1,000 tons of TNT. The atomic bomb dropped at Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, was a 12.5 kiloton weapon.

kindergarten

king

At second reference either the king or the full name, e.g. King Baudouin. Also capitalise the titles of deposed monarchs, e.g. ex-King Zahir Shah.

Kiribati

Formerly Gilbert Islands, West Pacific.

Kmart

No hyphen and no space.

Knesset

Lower house of Israeli Parliament.

knowledgeable

know-how

knot

A measurement of speed, not distance. It describes how many nautical miles (1.15 statute miles) a vessel or aircraft has travelled in one hour. Do not convert to miles per hour. Do not write knots per hour.

Kolkata

Not Calcutta, India.

Koran

Capitalised, the Koran.

Korean names

Koreans put their surname first. The given name follows, hyphenated, and with the initial letter of the first part in upper case and the initial letter of the second part in lower case. Examples: Kim Dae-jung, Roh Moo-hyun, Ahn Jung-hwan. Use the surname only at second reference, e.g. Kim, Roh, Ahn. There are some rare cases where there is just one monosyllabic given name, for example Park Seung, where Seung is the given name.

kosher

Lower case.

kowtow

No hyphen.

kph

Use km per hour on first reference, kph on subsequent references.

Ku Klux Klan

A loose-knit organisation of about 40 U.S. groups which claim the supremacy of the white or Aryan race.

kudos

Fame, credit or renown. Always singular.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 17:17, 25 March 2011.

L

Contents

- 1 laager, lager
- 2 Labour Party, Labor Day
- 3 lady
- 4 laissez faire
- 5 lambast
- 6 lame duck, lame-duck
- 7 Land
- 8 landmine
- 9 Land Rover
- 10 languid, limpid
- 11 languor, languorous
- 12 Laos
- 13 large-scale
- 14 laser
- 15 last/past/latest
- 16 Last Supper
- 17 late
- 18 latter, former
- 19 lathi
- 20 laudable, laudatory
- 21 launderette
- 22 lay, lie
- 23 lay waste
- 24 lead, leading, led
- 25 leave
- 26 Lebanon
- 27 lectern
- 28 leftist
- 29 left wing
- 30 left-arm spinner
- 31 leg slip
- 32 leg spinner
- 33 legend/legendary
- 34 Legionnaires' disease
- 35 legislature
- 36 lesbian, lesbianism
- 37 less
- 38 leukaemia, but in American style leukemia
- 39 level, levelling, levelled, but American style level, leveling, leveled
- 40 Levi's
- 41 leverage
- 42 liaison
- 43 liberal
- 44 licence, license
- 45 lie, lying, lied

- 46 lie in state
- 47 lieutenant
- 48 lifelong
- 49 life-size
- 50 lifestyle, lifetime
- 51 lift
- 52 lift off
- 53 light, lighting, lit
- 54 lightning, lightening
- 55 light-year
- 56 like, as
- 57 like, such as
- 58 like-
- 59 -like
- 60 likeable, but in American style likable
- 61 likely
- 62 linage, lineage
- 63 linchpin
- 64 liquefy, liquefaction
- 65 liquidation
- 66 liquidity
- 67 lists
- 68 literally
- 69 litre
- 70 livable
- 71 livid, vivid
- 72 Lloyd’s
- 73 loaded words
- 74 loans
- 75 loath, loathe
- 76 local
- 77 locate/location
- 78 London Club
- 79 long-off, long-on
- 80 long term, long-term
- 81 long time, longtime
- 82 looking to
- 83 Lord’s
- 84 lord-lieutenant, lord-lieutenants
- 85 lorry
- 86 loveable
- 87 low-income
- 88 LNG
- 89 LPG
- 90 LSD
- 91 lumbar, lumber
- 92 Luxembourg
- 93 Luxuriant, luxorious
- 94 Lycra
- 95 Lyon

laager, lager

A laager is a defensive encampment, literally or metaphorically. Lager is a type of beer.

Labour Party, Labor Day

Follow the convention used for proper names. Note in particular the Australian Labor Party

lady

Use woman. Permissible in a team title such as Fulham Ladies' football club. Where organisers use the title Ladies' Championship, as at Wimbledon, substitute women's championship.

laissez faire

lambast

lame duck, lame-duck

Two words for the noun, hyphenated for the adjective.

Land

The generic term for a federal state in Germany or Austria. The plural is Laender. Use state.

landmine

Land Rover

Trade mark. Capitalised. No hyphen.

languid, limpid

Languid means flagging, inert or listless. Limpid is clear or transparent.

languor, languorous

Laos

Use Lao for the language. Otherwise the adjective is Laotian, although there is a Lao ethnic group.

large-scale

Big is shorter and usually better.

laser

Acronym for a device using light amplification by stimulated emission of radiation.

last/past/latest

Last refers to times up to the present. Past is vaguer. The striker has been injured for the last (not past) three games but the star relived past glories. Use latest if last might confuse the most recent with the final occasion. His latest attempt my not be his last.

Last Supper

Capitalised.

late

Do not use to mean "dead".

latter, former

Avoid these expressions because they make readers read backwards to discern meaning.

lathi

Heavy stick carried by Indian police. Explain if used.

laudable, laudatory

Laudable is praiseworthy. Laudatory is giving or expressing praise.

launderette

British usage. In the United States, prefer self-service or coin-operated laundry.

lay, lie

Lay in the present tense takes an object. I lay down my arms, or I am laying down my arms. He laid down his arms. He has laid down his arms. Lie in the present tense does not take a direct object. I lie down to sleep, or I am lying down. I lay down yesterday. I have lain down for two hours.

lay waste

Lay waste a city, not lay waste to a city.

lead, leading, led

The past participle is led.

leave

As a verb, weak and imprecise. Use a more accurate and active verb. The attack killed three and wounded more than 20, not The attack left three killed. Duffy suffered torn ligaments after two clumsy tackles not Two clumsy tackles left Duffy with torn ligaments.

Lebanon

No definite article.

lectern

A speaker stands behind a lectern (a stand for notes) on a podium and in a pulpit. Several speakers can fit on a dais or rostrum or platform.

leftist

Avoid this term for something more precise.

left wing

A left-winger, a left-wing politician, but the left wing of the political spectrum.

left-arm spinner

The adjective is hyphenated.

leg slip

Two words for cricket fielding position.

leg spinner

Two words for bowler in cricket.

legend/legendary

Do not use except for legends. No sports person or film star is a legend.

Legionnaires' disease

Plural, possessive and capitalised

legislature

Lower case in all uses.

lesbian, lesbianism

Lower case.

less

Use fewer when referring to numbers of individuals or individual items, less for quantities, e.g. Fewer than 10 rescuers were hurt but Less than 1,000 tons of coal was lost.

leukaemia, but in American style leukemia

level, levelling, levelled, but American style level, leveling, leveled

Levi’s

Trademark for a brand of jeans. Note the apostrophe.

leverage

The ratio of a company's debt to equity. See glossary of financial terms.

liaison

Note the second i.

liberal

Capitalise only when part of a proper name.

licence, license

Licence is the noun, license the verb, but in American style license is both the noun and verb.

lie, lying, lied

To tell untruths.

lie in state

Applies only to people having a state funeral.

lieutenant

Hyphenate lieutenant-colonel and lieutenant-commander. At second reference just the colonel, the commander. Second lieutenant is not hyphenated but sub-lieutenant is. In the U.S. navy it is Lieutenant (j.g.) John Smith, j.g. meaning junior grade.

lifelong

It is wrong to call someone a lifelong alcoholic unless they started drinking in infancy. Make sure the activity or attribute really is lifelong.

life-size

lifestyle, lifetime

lift

Do not use as a synonym for raise, as in The Federal Reserve lifts discount rate.

lift off

Lift off is the verb, liftoff the noun and adjective.

light, lighting, lit

Use lit for the past participle.

lightning, lightening

Thunder follows lightning. After the storm the sky will be lightening.

light-year

A measure of distance not time. It is the distance light will travel in one year, about 6 million million miles (6 trillion miles) or 9.6 million million km (9.6 trillion km).

like, as

As compares verbs, like compares nouns and pronouns. He acted as a hero should, but he acted like a hero.

like, such as

Like means similar to. Such is used when offering an example. Politicians like Williams have short tempers and long memories, but Players such as Smith, Patel and Jones are essential in the team.

Do not use like as a synonym for as if. He looks as if he is reviving, not like he is reviving.

like-

Hyphenate the prefix when it means similar to, e.g. like-spirited. No hyphen when it is part of a single word, e.g. likeliness, likelihood.

-like

Do not precede the suffix with a hyphen unless it would create a triplle "l" or the main element is a proper noun. E.g. shell-like, Norwalk-like.

likeable, but in American style likable

likely

Avoid as an adverb modifying a verb, e.g. The prime minister will likely announce the date of the election on Friday. Preferable is The prime minister is likely to announceâ¦

linage, lineage

Linage is measurement or payment by the line and lineage is ancestry.

linchpin

Not lynchpin. But lynch law.

liquefy, liquefaction

Not liquify. But liquidate.

liquidation

See bankruptcy.

liquidity

The ease with which financial instruments can be traded on a market and turned into cash. Markets or instruments are described as being liquid, and having depth or liquidity, if there are enough

buyers and sellers to absorb sudden shifts in supply and demand without price distortions. The opposite of illiquid. The term can also be used loosely to describe cash flow in a business, so a company that has fallen into a liquidity trap may have growing orders and production but has run out of cash.

lists

Lists should be in alphabetical order unless there is some other point being emphasised in the text that calls for a different order. So when referring to the G7, for example, say it “comprises Britain, Canada, France, Germany, Italy Japan and the United States.”

literally

Use only in quotation since it almost always, in fact, means metaphorically.

litre

To convert to Imperial gallons roughly multiply by two and divide by nine, precisely multiply by 0.22. To convert to U.S. gallons roughly divide by 4, precisely multiply by 0.264. American style is liter.

livable

livid, vivid

Livid can be used colloquially for extremely angry, but it means black and blue or pale and ashen. Do not confuse with vivid, which means full of life or very bright.

Lloyd’s

Lloyd’s of London association of underwriters and Lloyd’s Register of Shipping both have apostrophes. Lloyds TSB Bank has no apostrophe.

loaded words

Avoid using admitted, agreed, according to, revealed, refuted, claimed etc. instead of said. They all contain an element of judgment by the reporter.

loans

Do not use the verb to give when referring to loans; they are paid for through interest. Do not say someone is raising a loan when it is being arranged. Use the word raise only when the amount of a

loan already arranged is being increased. We need the exact name of the borrower, whether the loan is being guaranteed by a parent company or another body, the amount, the maturity and the interest rate. If the interest rate is variable or “floating”, then we need the specific reference or base rate of interest, e.g. the three-month or six-month London interbank offered rate (Libor), and the margin of interest paid above, or even below it, e.g. 1/4 percentage point.

Abbreviations such as Libor, Sibor, etc., are acceptable on second reference or in headlines. The interest payment might vary with the maturity. A five-year loan could pay 1/8 over Libor for three years, rising to 1/4 over Libor for the last two years. The loan might have a grace period – the period during which only interest and no principal is paid.

We should also report the fees paid to the banks, to discover the true cost to the borrower. For loans, there is likely to be a commitment fee – payment on any unused funds – and a facility fee, which is a payment for arranging the loan.

Before a loan is fully repaid, borrowers can change the terms or replace it altogether. Sometimes a financially healthy borrower will take advantage of an improving market or credit rating to do so; but often requests for changed terms are signs of financial desperation. Of the definitions below, for example, a refinancing or refinancing in itself does not indicate financial health or desperation. More details would be required. The other terms, however, signal trouble.

Refinancing: Borrower pays off one loan with the proceeds from another provided by other lenders. If the lenders are effectively the same, bankers might call it a refinancing to disguise a rescheduling.

Restructuring: Borrower arranges to replace debt of one maturity with the debt of another.

Rescheduling: Borrower delays repayment of principal according to a new schedule. Interest continues to flow, but the rate of interest might be raised or lowered.

Moratorium: Borrower declares it needs time to sort out its economic affairs and suspends payments of principal and possibly of interest due. Determine whether interest will be paid. If so, banks can continue to classify the loan as a “performing” asset.

Repudiation: Borrower declares that it does not intend to service or repay existing debts.

Default:A loose term best avoided unless technically correct. (It is often used to mean anything from failure to make an interest payment up to an intent never to pay off a debt at all.) Technically, the borrower does not default. The lender declares the borrower in default, e.g. if the borrower does not repay either the interest or principal according to the loan conditions.

The borrower may also be in breach of certain agreements concerning its overall financial health. In either case, an “event of default” may then have occurred, but the lender can refrain from calling a default, preferring to help the borrower sort things out. Given the imprecision of the phrase, make clear the nature of any default declared. To avoid using the word default, bankers often prefer to call loans sub-standard, nonperforming or value-impaired.

loath, loathe

Loath (not loth) is the adjective meaning reluctant or unwilling and loathe is the verb to dislike

intensely.

local

Do not use. Local to what and to where? Say exactly where something is if you need to locate it. For example, the phrase local officials can confuse. Say officials in Tokyo, in Montevideo or wherever.

locate/location

Cumbersome and can usually be replaced by a better alternative, e.g. find, place, or by rephrasing the sentence.

London Club

An informal group of commercial creditors that meets to discuss debt problems with a particular country. They will normally set up an advisory committee of banks headed by a major creditor to look into ways to reschedule or write off debt arrears. Meetings are rarely held in London, but the term is bankers' shorthand to differentiate commercial creditors from the official ones which make up the Paris Club. Write an informal group of commercial creditors, called the London Club among bankers ...

long-off, long-on

Hyphenated for cricket fielding positions.

long term, long-term

Two words for the noun, one word hyphenated for the adjective. They had a long-term relationship which endured for the long term.

long time, longtime

Two words for the noun, one word for the adjective. Theirs was a longtime friendship which lasted a long time.

looking to

Japan was looking to Washington for support is all right. Japan was looking to restore good relations with Moscow is not.

Lord’s

The London cricket ground. Note apostrophe.

lord-lieutenant, lord-lieutenants

Hyphenated. Note the plural.

lorry

Use truck.

loveable

low-income

If you mean poor, say so.

LNG

liquefied natural gas.

LPG

liquefied petroleum gas (mainly propane and butane).

LSD

Explain: "the halucinogenic drug LSD."

lumbar, lumber

Lumbar is of the lower back and lumber is timber, stored furniture or to move heavily.

Luxembourg

Luxuriant, luxorious

Luxuriant is growth in rich abundance or excess. Luxurious is given to luxury or furnished with luxuries.

Lycra

A trademark. Use generic terms such as "stretch fabric".

Lyon

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:45, 4 December 2008.

M

Contents

- 1 Maastricht Treaty
- 2 Macau, not Macao
- 3 Mach number
- 4 machinegun
- 5 macroeconomic
- 6 Madagascar
- 7 Madonna
- 8 Madras
- 9 madrasa
- 10 mafia
- 11 Maghreb
- 12 mailman
- 13 maintain
- 14 major
- 15 majority of, vast majority of
- 16 majority, plurality
- 17 majority leader
- 18 Malagasy
- 19 Maldive Islands
- 20 Mali
- 21 Maltese
- 22 mammon
- 23 man, mankind
- 24 manifesto, manifestos
- 25 Manila
- 26 manoeuvre, but in American style maneuver
- 27 mantel, mantle
- 28 manufacture, manufacturer
- 29 maps
- 30 marines
- 31 marquis
- 32 Marseille
- 33 marshal, marshalling, marshalled, but in American style marshal, marshaling, marshalled
- 34 Massawa
- 35 Masters Series
- 36 Masters Tournament
- 37 masterful/masterly
- 38 match point
- 39 materiel
- 40 materialise
- 41 may, can
- 42 may, might
- 43 May Day, mayday
- 44 mayoress
- 45 McDonnell Douglas Corp

- 46 M.D.
- 47 meagre, but in American style meager
- 48 mean
- 49 Mecca
- 50 measures
- 51 Medal of Honor
- 52 Medecins sans Frontieres
- 53 media
- 54 medieval
- 55 medical stories
- 56 Medicaid
- 57 Medicare
- 58 meet, mete
- 59 mega-
- 60 megaton
- 61 megawatt
- 62 Melanesia
- 63 memento, mementos
- 64 memorandum, memorandums
- 65 men’s, women’s
- 66 Mercalli scale
- 67 Mercedes-Benz
- 68 merchant marine
- 69 merry-go-round
- 70 Messerschmitt
- 71 Messiah
- 72 metal, mettle
- 73 metaphors
- 74 meters
- 75 metre, but meter in American style
- 76 metric ton
- 77 Micronesia
- 78 mid-
- 79 middle initials in names
- 80 middleman
- 81 Mideast
- 82 MiG
- 83 mileage
- 84 mile
- 85 miles per gallon
- 86 miles per hour
- 87 militant
- 88 Military
    - 88.1 Aircraft
    - 88.2 Armoured Vehicles
    - 88.3 Battle
    - 88.4 Military titles
    - 88.5 Ships
    - 88.6 Units, formations
    - 88.7 Weapons

- 89 militate, mitigate
- 90 millennium, millennia
- 91 milligram
- 92 millimetre, but millimeter in American style
- 93 million
- 94 milquetoast
- 95 minimal
- 96 minuscule
- 97 miracles
- 98 mischievous, mischievously
- 99 mob
- 100 modalities
- 101 moderate
- 102 Mohammad
- 103 Muhammad
- 104 Monaco
- 105 money
- 106 moneyed
- 107 Mont Blanc
- 108 Montessori
- 109 months
- 110 Moonie
- 111 moot
- 112 more than
- 113 moribund
- 114 Mormon
- 115 Morse code
- 116 mortuary, not morgue
- 117 Moslem
- 118 mosquito
- 119 mother-in-law, mothers-in-law
- 120 Mother’s Day
- 121 mount
- 122 move
- 123 move to
- 124 mpg, mph
- 125 Ms
- 126 Muhammad
- 127 mujahideen
- 128 Mullah
- 129 multi
- 130 Mumbai
- 131 murder
- 132 Murphy's law
- 133 Muslim
- 134 mute
- 135 Myanmar

Maastricht Treaty

Macau, not Macao

Mach number

Mach 1, Mach 2 etc. The Mach number is the ratio of an aircraft's speed through the air compared with the speed of sound in the same conditions.

machinegun

One word.

macroeconomic

No hyphen.

Madagascar

Use Malagasy for the people and the language.

Madonna

Use this title or the Virgin Mary not Our Lady except in titles such as Our Lady of Czestochowa or in the names of churches.

Madras

Use Chennai, India.

madrasa

Arabic word for school. Used to describe an Islamic religious school in some Muslim countries.

mafia

Lower case unless referring to a specific branch.

Maghreb

Loosely North Africa, less Egypt, and literally the western part of the Middle East. Maghreb is also the official name in Arabic of the Moroccan state.

mailman

Use letter carrier or postal worker (U.S.)

maintain

Use this word with care. As a verb of saying it can, like claim, suggest reporters are sceptical about the statement quoted.

major

Avoid as an adjective. If it is not superfluous find a precise alternative. One exception is golf, where the four biggest tournaments are known as the majors.

majority of, vast majority of

Use most.

majority, plurality

In election results a majority is more than half the votes, or more votes than all others combined. A plurality is more than the next highest number of votes. It may be less than 50 percent. An absolute majority is more than half the votes and a relative majority is more votes than anyone else. When used alone, majority and plurality are usually followed by a singular verb.

majority leader

U.S. political term. Capital when used as a formal title, e.g. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid or House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer.

Malagasy

The people or language of Madagascar.

Maldive Islands

Adjective Maldivian, South Asia.

Mali

Country in West Africa; adjective Malian

Maltese

People of Malta.

mammon

Lower case.

man, mankind

Humanity is preferable when referring to the human race.

manifesto, manifestos

Manila

Capital of the Philippines. Lower case for paper and envelopes.

manoeuvre, but in American style maneuver

mantel, mantle

Mantel is a frame around a fireplace. Mantle is a cloak or covering.

manufacture, manufacturer

Make or maker is shorter.

maps

Always check distances and directions given in a story by using a map. Check place names, too.

marines

Capitalise when referring to the U.S. Marine Corps or when referring to its members. e.g. Six U.S. Marines, the U.S. Marines, Marine operations. Do not refer to them as "soldiers".

marquis

Not marquess

Marseille

Not Marseilles, France.

marshal, marshalling, marshalled, but in American style marshal, marshaling, marshalled

The noun is an official in charge of ceremonies or military affairs, as in field marshal. The verb is to arrange in order. It is the Marshall Plan and the Marshall Islands in the Pacific. Do not confuse with martial, belonging to war or to the army or navy.

Massawa

Not Massoua, Ethiopia.

Masters Series

Leading tournaments in men’s tennis. Capitalised and with no apostrophe, e.g. Rome Masters Series tournament.

Masters Tournament

Golf tournament. No apostrophe, the Masters on second reference.

masterful/masterly

Masterly means very skilful and worthy of a master or champion. Masterful is imperious and domineering. The champion put on a masterly display of putting but The CEO had a masterful way with his executives.

match point

Two words in tennis and other racket sports' scoring.

materiel

Use the English term military equipment.

materialise

Unless you mean take bodily form it is simpler to write happen or occur or take place.

may, can

May is about asking permission and can is about the ability to act. If we may borrow your car we can drive to the beach. May can also be about uncertainty. War may start tomorrow, or may not. War can start tomorrow because all the weapons are in place. Using may in headlines is overdone.

may, might

In the past tense may implies continued uncertainty, while might implies a possibility which did not happen. Manchester United may have signed a new striker (but they may have not). Manchester City might have won the cup (but they did not, because they failed to sign the striker).

May Day, mayday

May Day, capitalised, is the holiday, and mayday is the international distress call for ships and aircraft.

mayoress

The wife of a mayor, not a female mayor.

McDonnell Douglas Corp

Not MacDonnell or McDonnell-Douglas for the U.S. aircraft company.

M.D.

Use doctor, physician or surgeon.

meagre, but in American style meager

mean

Place the word average where it correctly qualifies the item or quantity intended, e.g. Reporters drink an average of six cups of coffee a day. (Not: the average reporter drinks six cups of coffee a day). There are three types:(most often used) is calculated by adding all the constituent parts together and dividing by the number of parts.The middle value, meaning the number of values above it is the same as the number below it. The most commonly occurring value.

Mecca

One of Islam's Holy Places. Do not use in a colloquial sense since it is disparaging e.g. tourist mecca.

measures

When abbreviating metric units use the singular form without a full stop, e.g. kg or km not kgs or kms. The following need not be spelled out on first mention: kg, km, lb, cm, mm. See also conversions, pound and ton/tonne.

Medal of Honor

The highest U.S. military honor, awarded by Congress. Do not refer to "Congressional Medal of Honor".

Medecins sans Frontieres

Literally Doctors without Borders, a group of volunteer doctors and other medical staff of various nationalities who operate with the agreement of the local government where they are needed, e.g. war, epidemics, famine. It has no political line. Spell out in first reference. At second reference abbreviate it to MSF and translate it. Take care when saying where MSF is based. There are different branches which act independently of each other. See www.msf.org

media

A plural noun.

medieval

medical stories

Handle stories about new threats to health or reputed cures for AIDS, cancer and other scourges with great care They play on the hopes and fears of millions of people. If a story making dramatic claims for a cure for AIDS or cancer does not come from a reputable named source it must be checked with recognised medical experts.

Medicaid

U.S. federal state programme that helps pay for health care for the needy, elderly, blind and disabled and low-income families.

Medicare

U.S. federal health care insurance program for people 65 and older and for the disabled.

meet, mete

He met party leaders, not He met with party leaders. Mete is distribute or apportion, and meet is fitting. You mete out meet punishment. The adjectival use should be avoided unless in direct quotation.

mega-

Avoid as a prefix meaning very large. Use only when it means one million.

megaton

A measure of explosive force. A megaton is equivalent to the explosive force of one million tons of TNT (trinitrotoluene).

megawatt

The capacity and instantaneous output of a power station is measured in megawatts and its cumulative output is measured in megawatt hours.

For example, if a power plant produces electricity at a constant rate of 500 MW for an hour it will have produced 500 MWh. Or if it produces 1 MW of electricty constantly for a period of 500 hours it will also have produced 500 MWh.

Do not confuse megawatt MW (1 million watts, enough to power a train) with a milliwatt mW (one thousandth of a watt , enough to power a hearing aid).

Melanesia

An island group in the Southwest Pacific. Micronesia is a group north of Melanesia and Polynesia is in the central Pacific.

memento, mementos

memorandum, memorandums

men’s, women’s

But menswear and womenswear.

Mercalli scale

See earthquakes.

Mercedes-Benz

Note hyphen.

merchant marine

Lower case.

merry-go-round

Messerschmitt

Not Messerschmidt for the German aircraft or in the aerospace and armaments group Messerschmitt-Boelkow-Bloehm.

Messiah

Capitalised in religious uses and lower case when used generically to mean a liberator.

metal, mettle

Metal is copper or steel. Mettle is spirit, temperament or courage.

metaphors

A fresh and vivid metaphor can add much to a story. But avoid mixed metaphors, e.g. The Egyptian swimmers walked away with the championships, and metaphors whose literal sense is absurd e.g., a growing bottleneck, which would solve rather than aggravate a problem.

meters

Not metres for gas, electricity and parking meters.

metre, but meter in American style

Spell out in full, e.g. 100 metres. Convert metres to feet for short distances (up to 10 metres), to yards for longer distances. To convert to feet roughly add a zero and divide by three, precisely multiply by 3.28. To convert to yards roughly add a zero and divide by nine, precisely multiply by 1.094. In athletics and swimming results metre, kilometre and centimetre are no longer specified. The figure is enough. In sports reporting do not convert to feet or yards except for golf and U.S. sport.

metric ton

We use both tons and tonnes, without having to give a conversion, but you must make clear what kind of ton(ne) is meant, using the terms long and short where appropriate. The three measures are:

tonne – 2,204.6 pounds (1,000 kg), formerly called metric ton

long ton – 2,240 pounds (or 20 hundredweights, 20 x 112 pounds).

short ton – 2,000 pounds, American ton

Micronesia

See Melanesia.

mid-

No hyphen unless the following word starts with a capital letter, e.g. mid-Pacific, mid-Atlantic. Cricket terms are an exception, e.g. mid-off, mid-on, mid-wicket. Also midterm, no hyphen. .

middle initials in names

Do not use them unless they are an essential distinguisher.

middleman

One word.

Mideast

Never use in a headline or text. Use Middle East.

MiG

Note the lower case i. Use this abbreviation for the aircraft, e.g. MiG-25.

mileage

mile

To convert to kilometres roughly multiply by 8 and divide by 5, precisely multiply by 1.609. One nautical or sea mile equals 1.853 km.

miles per gallon

Use the abbreviation mpg only for second and subsequent references.

miles per hour

Use the abbreviation mph only for second and subsequent references.

militant

A non-state group or members of a non-state group who carry arms or believe in using force to achieve aims.

Military

If in doubt, use the generic term or leave it out. Avoid military jargon, which is particularly impenetrable. However, an attempt should be made to understand it. Jargon is encouraged in the armed forces to reduce the emotional element in the business of killing people, to encourage secrecy and to reduce the number of words in issuing orders. Faced by an inquisitive civilian, the military may deliberately obfuscate or evade admissions of defeat or error with an avalanche of esoteric terms and acronyms. Know them, but do not use them. For example **collateral damage,** military-speak for striking unintended targets, whether people or buildings. Also, **friendly fire**, which means attacking your own side by mistake in combat. Do not use either unless in quotes. Prefer plain English. Similarly, avoid military metaphors.

Aircraft

air base – two words. So also air raid but airspace and airstrike.

AWACS – Airborne Warning And Control System. Aircraft equipped with search radar, height-finding radar and communications equipment for controlling weapons, generally other aircraft, surveillance and early warning. The United States uses modified Boeing 707s with rotating radar domes above the fuselage. The U.S. Navy uses a smaller AWACS, the twin-engine turboprop E2C Hawkeye with a revolving dome. It flies from aircraft carriers and is built by Northrop Grumman Corp.

Helicopters – Helicopters are also aircraft. A spokesman who mentions aircraft could be referring to fixed-wing aircraft or helicopters or both.

stealth – U.S. stealth aircraft are the F-117A Nighthawk fighter which is in fact a small bomber flown by a single crew member and designed for night attack on ground targets, not aerial warfare, and the larger B-2 “flying-wing” bomber manned by two or three crew and able to carry 16 2,000-pound (900 kg) satellite-guided bombs. Both aircraft are subsonic. They depend for their safety on carbon-based composite building materials and an unusual shape that absorbs radar signals or reflects them at angles which make the aircraft difficult to detect for useful periods of time. Do not capitalise stealth.

STOL – short take-off and landing. (See also VTOL)

strafe – to machinegun or rocket from the air. Do not use in referring to aerial bombing or ground-to-ground attacks.

UAV – Unmanned Aerial Vehicle. The Predator is a U.S.-built UAV costing $3 million that is primarily used to collect intelligence but can act as an offensive weapon, sometimes equipped with two Hellfire missiles. The Global Hawk with a wingspan wider than a Boeing 737's can loiter high above the area it is monitoring for more than 24 hours while the Dragoneye is a tiny unmanned scout aircraft for reconnaissance by ground troops.

VTOL – vertical take-off and landing. The British-designed AV-8B Harrier 'jump jet' developed in the 1960s is unique among jet fighters in being able to take off vertically.

warplane – One word. It is a useful one for the lead paragraph but it is better in most cases to be specific (fighter, bomber) although some aircraft can carry out a variety of missions, such as the F16. The Fairchild A-10 Thunderbolt is a ground-attack aircraft designed to support ground forces. The Panavia Tornado is a multi-role combat aircraft. The B-52 is a long-range bomber. In financial stories and when dealing with contracts, sales and development, put the manufacturer's name (and company) before the aircraft type.

Armoured Vehicles

If in doubt about the name of any of these just call it an armoured vehicle. An artillery piece such as a gun or howitzer may be mounted on tracks or wheels and be self-propelled. Journalists have mistaken self-propelled guns for tanks.

armoured fighting vehicle (AFV) – neither a tank nor an armoured personnel carrier, but a hybrid evolved in an era of fast-paced warfare in which infantry must keep up with tanks. An AFV like the Bradley Fighting Vehicle used by the U.S. military carries a squad of infantry. The Soviet-designed BMP-1 carries infantry and is armed with an anti-tank missile launcher and a 73mm gun. The British GKN Warrior is a 25-tonne tracked armoured vehicle with a 30mm cannon.

armoured personnel carrier (APC) – A tracked or wheeled vehicle that carries small groups of infantry into battle. It provides protection against small-arms fire and shell splinters, and may be armed with machineguns. The Soviet designed BTR-60 has gunports down the side.

tank – The main battlefield weapon, combining firepower, mobility and protection. They are tracked, and usually armed with a large gun of perhaps 105mm, 120mm or 130mm calibre firing with the help of computerised target selection and fire control. Shells hardened with depleted uranium may be used to pierce armour. The secondary armament consists of one or more machineguns. The M1-A1 and M1-A2 Abrams used by the U.S. army have top speeds of 40 mph (60 kph). The British Challenger tank is designed to survive nuclear, chemical and biological attack.

Battle

battlefield – one word. Also battlefront and battleground.

battledress – A loose, drab uniform, comprising a single overall or jacket and trousers, that blends in with the environment, provides protection against extreme weather and allows plenty of movement. Write soldiers in battle gear to refer to soldiers wearing the harness known as webbing that supports ammunition clips, grenades, water bottles, entrenching tools, ground sheet and rations.

BDA – Military shorthand for Bomb Damage Assessment. Avoid both unless in quotes. Spell out BDA in brackets if used in a quote

biological warfare – The use in warfare of micro-organisms to cause death or disease.

ceasefire – one word

chemical warfare – The use of chemicals other than explosives, e.g. gas.

fighting – This is relative. It ranges from hand-to-hand combat to the risk of an exchange of intercontinental ballistic missiles. Avoid ‘fierce’ fighting and ‘heavy’ fighting unless casualties are known to be heavy or the fire intense. Spell out what is meant. Avoid using ‘infantry fighting’ simply because combatants are on foot. It implies a set-piece engagement not, for instance, a few militiamen jumping garden walls and blasting away with rifles.

gunbattle – one word. So also gunfire as well as gunman and gunpoint.

no man’s land – no hyphens

offensive – An offensive is more specific than an attack. It is an extensive attack over days, weeks or months often on a wide front or an entire theatre of a campaign or war by air, sea or ground forces and sometimes all three.

raid – Use only when a force attacks and then leaves an objective, as opposed to occupying it.

Military titles

Ranks should never be abbreviated and should be capitalised when referring to a specific individual. In general, ranks in the armed forces of the main English-speaking countries such as the United States, Britain and Australia are not hyphenated, eg Lieutenant Colonel, Rear Admiral, Air Chief Marshal. However, there are exceptions, such as Canada and India,. which hyphenate their titles and we should follow the local practice. At second and subsequent reference, use the surname OR his or her rank, eg Major General John Brown becomes either Brown or the general (not the major general). Ranks in the non-English-speaking world should be translated without hyphens.

Ships

warship – A naval vessel, though not necessarily an armed one. The term does imply the ship is a combatant but a fleet auxiliary – a navy ship carrying stores, fuel and ammunition – is a warship. Warships vary in armament and in size, from a few hundred tonnes to tens of thousands. Identify the type – e.g. fast patrol-boat, corvette, frigate, destroyer, cruiser. Never use battleship as a synonym for warship.

aircraft carrier – A floating airfield, it carries fixed-wing aircraft on its flight deck and/or helicopters. It should not be confused with other classes of warship, such as frigate, destroyer or cruiser. These may also carry helicopters but they are not aircraft carriers.

assault ship – A warship designed to support amphibious and air operations against a land- based enemy. They carry helicopters, landing craft, commandos or marines, and may carry amphibious armoured vehicles.

battleship – A specific class of warship, the battleship is obsolete. It is not to be confused with other classes like corvette, minesweeper, patrol boat, frigate, destroyer. Do not use as a synonym for warship.

submarine – In naval parlance a boat rather than a ship. A submarine may fight submerged or on the surface, using torpedoes or missiles – the missiles being tactical or strategic. There are two main submarine types depending on the method of propulsion: nuclear and diesel electric.

Units, formations

Units, formations, army – Use capitals when you write the title of a specific unit e.g. the 1st Infantry Division but otherwise say division. Also note that there are many national exceptions to these broad definitions.

squad – The basic building block of an army, equivalent to the British section of eight soldiers. Three squads or sections form a platoon. platoon – The essential tactical unit in any army, capable of patrolling, attacking and defending independently. Usually about 30-strong, an infantry

platoon typically has three sections or squads. The platoon may be led by a sergeant or a junior commissioned officer. It may have its own light machinegun and mortar units of two or three men each as well as anti-tank weapons and possibly shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. In a cavalry (armoured) unit the platoon is often called a troop of three or four vehicles. Some armies use troop instead of platoon in their artillery units.

company – usually three platoons commanded by a major or captain. In a cavalry unit the term squadron may be used. Artillery may be organised in batteries of six to a dozen guns, rocket-launchers or mortars. **battalion** – the basic building block of any big military formation, a battalion comprises about 500 to 1,000 soldiers, broken down into companies, platoons, squads or sections. It is usually commanded by a lieutenant-colonel. It is the highest single-arm unit in many armies i.e. infantry, armoured or engineer battalion. Higher formations tend to be mixed and comprise, for instance, infantry and tank battalions. Some armies use the term regiment for a tank or artillery battalion.

brigade – Several battalions or regiments grouped together. Commanded by a brigadier, as in the British Army, or brigadier-general. Some armies confuse reporters by using regiment to mean a brigade.

division – A group of brigades. Usually commanded by a major-general, it can contain all elements needed to operate independently and is then effectively a small self-contained army.

corps – Usually at least two divisions. Often commanded by a lieutenant-general.

army – At least two corps. Tends to be the command of a full five-star general or, a marshal or field marshal. The army group – of several armies – was a feature of the big land battles of World War Two.

infantry – Soldiers who fight on foot. Traditionally, infantry marched into battle. Mechanised infantry refers to foot soldiers carried to the battlefield in trucks. In modern armies, infantry is carried into battle in armoured vehicles, supported by tanks and artillery.

regiment – Be careful with this term. Use varies. Find out precisely what is meant in any particular case. It can be used as a synonym for either a battalion or a brigade. Also, a regiment in the British army may have one or more battalions but these rarely serve together as or in a brigade. The 1st battalion of the Royal Halberdiers may be part of an armoured brigade formed for service in the Middle East while the 2nd battalion of the same regiment is in Scotland.

special forces – Anything from the U.S. Rangers, Russia's Spetsnaz and Britain's Special Air Service Regiment to thugs with weapons. So-called special forces have been known to carry out such "special tasks" as ethnic cleansing, i.e. killing civilians. Use with care. Also avoid using the subjective terms crack and elite.

squadron – As with regiment, be careful. Many but not all cavalry (armoured) regiments are broken down into squadrons and troops. Some air forces are organised on the basis of squadrons – each with several flights – and grouped as wings. The term squadron may also refer to a group of ships, a small fleet usually put together for some particular task.

task force – A force organised for a special operation.

troops – Use in the plural for large, round numbers – scores, hundreds, thousands – of soldiers, not for small specific numbers. France sent 5,000 troops to the Gulf is right. Guerrillas killed three government troops is wrong. A troop may also be a small unit of armour or guns.

Weapons

air-to-ground – hyphenate. Also anti-aircraft.

artillery – a weapon that provides indirect fire over long distances. It comprises guns, howitzers, large mortars, multiple-rocket launchers, anti-aircraft guns and missiles. Avoid saying "big guns" or "heavy artillery" to dramatise events. Some armies use heavy artillery only for guns of a calibre of 203mm and up.

automatic weapon -- reloads itself and keeps firing as long as the trigger is pressed. A semi-automatic reloads itself but the trigger has to be pressed for each shot. Many types of rifle offer the option of automatic fire and semi-automatic. A pistol is not an automatic weapon, but a machine-pistol is.

ballistic missile – A missile that is initially powered and may be guided but falls under gravity on to its target. It is fired upwards and then comes down. Some missiles, although not many, fly on a flat trajectory and are therefore not ballistic missiles, e.g. a cruise missile.

bullet – the projectile fired from a pistol, rifle or machinegun. It is distinguished from the spent cartridge case ejected from the weapon. The entire cartridge comprises cartridge case, priming

charge, propellant and bullet.

bunker buster – an air-launched, laser-guided U.S. bomb of around 5,000 lb (2,270 kg) used to penetrate hardened concrete structures, often underground.

calibre – the calibre of a weapon that fires bullets, or rounds, is the internal diameter of its barrel. It is expressed in millimetres or decimal fractions of an inch, e.g. a 12.7mm machinegun is equivalent to the U.S.-designed .50 calibre machinegun. Other examples: a 155mm howitzer, a 105mm field gun, an eight-inch gun, a.22 pistol, a Colt.45, a.38 revolver.

cannon – A light, fast-firing weapon used to engage aircraft, ground or seaborne targets. It can be mounted in aircraft or on a truck, a tank chassis, a fast patrol boat or as the main armament on an armoured vehicle. It often has more than one barrel, and typically varies in calibre from 20mm up to 40mm. Cannon as a synonym for artillery is archaic and should be avoided.

cluster bomb – Released from the air and contains around 200 bomblets that can penetrate armour or kill anyone stepping on them.

cruise missile – A missile like the U.S. Tomahawk guided to its target using terrain-mapping radar. It can be a ground-launched cruise missile (GL-CM) or air-launched (ALCM). They can also be launched from ships and submarines. Do not capitalise cruise.

Daisy Cutter – a large 6,800 kg (15,000 lb) U.S. bomb

e-bomb – energy pulse bomb. This emits high-power microwave signals intended to cripple enemy electronics.

gun – A long-range artillery weapon that fires shells through a rifled barrel over a considerable distance. A gun may be towed or self-propelled, when it moves under its own power on tracks or wheels, with the crew provided with some degree of armoured protection.

howitzer – An artillery piece with a relatively short barrel designed to fire at a high angle over hills or fortifications. It may be towed or it may be self-propelled.

ICBM – Intercontinental ballistic missile with a range of about 3,500 miles.

IRBM – Intermediate range ballistic missile

machinegun – A fully automatic weapon. A light machinegun typically provides a squad or section of soldiers with fire support. Although it is called light it may be heavier than a rifle. An example is the U.S. 5.56mm M-60. A heavy machinegun is “heavy” in terms of its calibre, not its weight. It may be used to provide the main armament on a troop carrier or the secondary armament on a tank. Do not confuse with a sub-machinegun which is lighter and designed for individual rather than group use.

machine pistol – An old term for a weapon superseded by the sub-machinegun. Use the expression machine pistol only when a weapon is specifically designated as such by the manufacturer or armed forces using it.

MIRV – Multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicle. Each of the warheads carried by this ICBM can be aimed at a different target.

MOAB – Massive Ordnance Air Blast. A 9,750 kg (21,500 lb) bomb known as the “Mother of All Bombs”.

mortar – a mortar fires a bomb, not a shell, from a tube. It is therefore wrong to say mortars exploded at the airport. It is correct to say mortar bombs or mortar rounds did so. The mortar bomb has fins to stabilise it in flight. It is lobbed at the target, describing a steep parabola and falling almost vertically. It can strike behind a hill, house or wall, or hit troops in trenches. Small mortars are carried by infantry, larger ones may be mounted or towed.

multiple-rocket launcher – A number of tubes or racks, usually mounted on a vehicle and capable of firing rockets singly or in salvos.

recoilless rifle – An anti-tank weapon. Although largely ineffective against most modern tanks, it is still widely used by guerrillas or militias in many countries. It looks like a tube, slightly flared at the rear end, is often mounted on wheels and is recoilless in the sense that gases from the weapon’s discharge are allowed to escape from the rear of the weapon. It fires an anti-tank round. Do not confuse it with a mortar or a howitzer.

rifle – It has a rifled barrel, imparting spin to the bullet to help give range and stability. The trend is towards lighter, shorter and smaller calibre rifles. The automatic rifle is the infantry’s standard weapon with an effective range of 300 to 1,200 yards. It may be semi-automatic, automatic or both. Bolt-action rifles, in which each cartridge is manually placed in the breech using a bolt mechanism, are still used by snipers because of their accuracy, range and reliability.

RPG – Rocket-propelled grenade.

sub-machinegun – An automatic weapon with many of the characteristics of a machinegun – fully automatic, a high rate of fire – but it is lighter, shorter, of smaller calibre and is designed for the individual rather than the group. It can be easily concealed. Its small size and light weight make it ideal for combat in built-up areas, for guerrilla warfare and for airborne forces. It has a short range, and is less accurate than a rifle or machinegun. Definitions are blurred: a Kalashnikov AK-47 was designated a sub-machinegun by the former Soviet armed forces but is known as an assault rifle in the West.

SAM – Surface-to-air missile, launched from the surface against an aircraft or another missile.

SLBM – Ship- or submarine-launched ballistic missile.

unconventional weapon – Avoid. It is often used by “conventional” military forces to refer to effective methods or weapons they do not have, do not understand and generally disapprove of. Using a bamboo spike smeared with excrement may have been unconventional to the U.S. soldier impaled on it, but it came naturally to a Vietnamese irregular. Depending on who is speaking, the term “unconventional weapons” might also mean nuclear, germ or chemical weapons. Be specific.

WMD – The abbreviation for weapons of mass destruction. Spell out on first reference. Usually taken to mean biological, chemical and nuclear weapons.

militate, mitigate

Militate means to have force or influence and is often used in the phrase to militate against. Do not confuse with mitigate which means to alleviate or to moderate.

millennium, millennia

From the Latin mille, a thousand, and annus, a year.

milligram

millimetre, but millimeter in American style

Use mm with no space, e.g. 30mm cannon.

million

The word is spelled out but the abbreviation mln can be used for the sake of brevity in headlines. Use numerals before million, 6 million. Do not go beyond two decimla places.

milquetoast

A character easily dominated, not milk toast.

minimal

The least possible size or amount. Do not confuse with small or even tiny.

minuscule

Prefer very small or unimportant.

miracles

Keep miracles for religious stories. In disaster reports avoid the clichÃ©: “It was a miracle no one was killed,” said a rescue worker.

mischievous, mischievously

mob

Use this word with care and never of a political protest. The neutral crowd is usually better unless there is an outbreak of unorganised violence.

modalities

Use means, procedures.

moderate

Use with care. Often used to describe Islam or Muslims in a particular country, implying a value judgment.

Mohammad

Use this form for the Prophet and for anyone else of this name unless we know that he prefers an alternative spelling or an alternative appears in an official title or name for an organisation.

Muhammad

Use Mohammad.

Monaco

Not Monte Carlo as dateline.

money

Not monies.

moneyed

Not monied, but prefer rich or wealthy.

Mont Blanc

At 15,771 feet/4,807 metres, this French mountain is the highest in western Europe. But the highest mountain in Europe is Elbrus (18,481 feet/5,633 metres) in the Caucasus.

Montessori

months

Abbreviate to Jan. Feb. Aug. Sept. Oct. Nov. and Dec. with a full stop when used with a specific date, Feb. 12, but spell out in full when used alone or with only the year, February 2002. In datelines and headlines, months are given as follows: Jan, Feb, March, April, May, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct, Nov, Dec, without full stop.

Moonie

A perjorative term for members of the Unification Church of Rev. Sun Myung Moon. We should not use it in copy and avoid it when possible in direct quotations. See religious terms

moot

Little understood outside the United States. If you use the phrase a moot point in a quote, explain it – a debatable point.

more than

Use more than with numbers and over with less specific quantities. More than 100 or over half.

moribund

About to die or in a dying state. It does not mean something is weak or stagnant or not growing.

Mormon

A member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints or Mormon Church. Only the “L” is capitalised in “Latter-day.” The Church claims eight million members worldwide.

Morse code

mortuary, not morgue

Moslem

Use Muslim in all cases.

mosquito

mosquitoes.

mother-in-law, mothers-in-law

Mother’s Day

Not Mothers’ Day.

mount

give the full name, whether of mountains or communities, e.g. Mount Everest, Mount Vernon.

move

Avoid as a noun. Prefer decision, agreement, or another more precise alternative.

move to

This phrase is often used to give a spurious sense of physical action when in fact the only action has been verbal, e.g. Clinton moved to head off congressional opposition to his budget plans when he said.... Avoid it.

mpg, mph

miles per gallon, miles per hour – both acceptable at second and subsequent references, both lower case and without full stops. Spell out miles per gallon and miles per hour in full on first reference.

Ms

Not used, as also Mr, Mrs, Miss, Master.

Muhammad

Use Mohammad.

mujahideen

A term for Islamic guerrilla groups, meaning holy warriors.

Mullah

A Muslim scholar. Most often used pejoratively to refer to clerics in Iran, although it is a neutral term for Muslim prayer leaders in Afghanistan. Avoid in Iranian context and never use as shorthand for Tehran’s religious-political leadership unless quoting somebody.

multi

Words starting with multi are not hyphenated – multilateral, multinational, multicultural, multilingual

Mumbai

Not Bombay, India unless in a proper name.

murder

Use this word only of violent deaths that have no political overtones and generally avoid unless there has been a conviction. Otherwise stick to killing unless the word murder is used in a criminal charge or trial.

Murphy's law

if something can go wrong, it will. Avoid, but explain if in a quote.

Muslim

Not Moslem.

mute

Describes someone who is physically unable to speak. Do not use dumb. People who have difficulty speaking are speech impaired.

Myanmar

Formerly Burma.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 12:18, 10 November 2010.

N

Contents

- 1 NAACP
- 2 NAFTA
- 3 names
- 4 Nanjing
- 5 nano-
- 6 naphtha
- 7 NASA
- 8 nation
- 9 National Guard
- 10 national names
- 11 nationalities
- 12 national security adviser
- 13 nationwide
- 14 Native American
- 15 NATO
- 16 naught, nought
- 17 nauseous, nauseated
- 18 nautical mile
- 19 naval, navel
- 20 nave, knave
- 21 navy
- 22 nearby, near by
- 23 negatives
- 24 neither, nor
- 25 NEPAD
- 26 Nepali
- 27 nerve-racking
- 28 Netherlands
- 29 nevertheless
- 30 new
- 31 news conference
- 32 New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day
- 33 newspaper titles
- 34 nicknames
- 35 nighttime
- 36 Nissan, Nissen
- 37 Nobel Prize, Nobel Prizes
- 38 noisome, noisy
- 39 no man’s land
- 40 no one
- 41 nobility
- 42 non-
- 43 none
- 44 nonetheless
- 45 Nordic countries

- 46 normalcy
- 47 Northern Ireland
- 48 notable
- 49 noted
- 50 now
- 51 nowadays
- 52 nuclear power
- 53 numbers
- 54 numerous
- 55 numskull

NAACP

National Association for the Advancement of Colored Peoples (U.S.)

NAFTA

North American Free Trade Agreement. A trade pact between the United States, Mexico and Canada.

names

See personal names, proper names, courtesy titles, nobility, religious titles, royalty.

Nanjing

Not Nanking, China.

nano-

Prefix for one-billionth of a unit.

naphtha

Not naptha.

NASA

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (U.S.). At first reference a form like the U.S. space agency NASA is acceptable. See www.nasa.gov

nation

Do not write the nation’s when you are referring to a specific country. Be specific – Britain’s largest airport or Germany’s largest airport. The nation’s capital is an American clichÃ© for Washington. We should use the U.S. capital.

National Guard

Stories from the United States filed to the rest of the world should explain that this is a militia force. In American style, capitalize for U.S. or state forces, the National Guard, Kansas National Guard. Lower case for the national guards of other countries.

national names

You need not specify a minister’s nationality in the first paragraph of a story that names the country and comes from a dateline in that country. Under a Washington dateline, for example, write: Secretary of State Joan Smith said on Friday the United States would... not U.S. Secretary of State Joan Smith said on Friday the United States would ... There is likewise no need to specify the nationality of groups that obviously are of the nationality of the country datelined. Under an Athens dateline it is Police arrested not Greek police arrested.

nationalities

Nationalities are written out in full and not abbreviated in stories and in sports results. The only exception is U.S. for United States. Use Britain and British (not United Kingdom or Great Britain). Use The Netherlands (not Holland) and Taiwan (not Chinese Taipei). Distinguish between North and South Korea.

national security adviser

Not an official title: lower case.

nationwide

Rarely necessary in the phrase nationwide broadcast. If a head of state or government goes on television or radio we can assume the broadcast is nationwide. Specify if it is not.

Native American

The preferred term, bearing in mind that it includes e.g. Inuit who are not Indians. American Indian is acceptable. Where possible, be more specific and give the name of the tribe (eg. Navajo, Cherokee). See race

NATO

North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Brussels), the Western military alliance founded in 1949. The initials may be used by themselves at first reference with the full name given lower in the story. www.nato.int

naught, nought

You come to naught, or set a naught. Nought is the number zero.

nauseous, nauseated

Nauseous is the same as nauseant, producing nausea. Nauseated is sickened. Only very objectionable people are nauseous. Ordinary people are much more likely to be nauseated.

nautical mile

1,852 metres or 1.1515 statute miles. Do not convert the nautical mile used for fishing limits, by ships when reporting distances at sea and by NASA and others reporting space shots. If using nautical miles in space stories, make this clear in text. See also knot.

naval, navel

Naval is pertaining to warships or a navy. Navel belongs to the centre of the abdomen.

nave, knave

Nave is the main part of a church. A knave is a false, deceitful person.

navy

International style is to capitalise if the word appears in the formal title, the British Navy or the Royal Navy, otherwise lower case. In American style, capitalise for U.S. Navy, lower case for other navies.

nearby, near by

Nearby is an adjective, the nearby town. Near by is an adverb. We stayed near by.

negatives

These can be troublesome, for instance if the word not is dropped in a sentence or mutilated to now. Try to avoid using not where other forms can be found, e.g.: decided against rather than decided not to … unnecessary rather than not necessary … declined to comment rather than would not comment. Try to avoid officialese euphemisms containing the word negative, e.g. negative growth is shrinking.

neither, nor

Can govern only two elements e.g. Neither Norway nor Sweden voted. Do not write Neither Norway, Sweden nor Denmark voted. If both elements are singular use a singular verb, e.g. Neither France nor Germany welcomes the prospect. If one element is singular and one plural then the verb agrees with the noun nearest to it. e.g. Neither the players nor the referee is fit. Neither Joe nor his parents were able to come. Always use neither ... nor… Do not use neither…or. Always use not ... or. Do not use not…nor.

NEPAD

New Partnership for Africa's Development (Midrand, South Africa). An agency reporting to African Union leaders with the mission to strengthen Africa's political and economic governance and mobilise external and African financial resources for the continent's development. See www.nepad.org

Nepali

Not Nepalese as adjective.

nerve-racking

Netherlands

In text write the Netherlands, in datelines omit the article, e.g. ARNHEM, Netherlands, May 16 ...

nevertheless

new

Can often be omitted. Companies often announce that they will build a new plant. New is superfluous since, by definition, any plant being built must be new.

news conference

Preferred to press conference.

New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day

But good luck in the new year.

newspaper titles

Whatever the masthead says do not capitalise articles and particles in the names of English-language newspapers and magazines, e.g. the New York Times, the News of the World. The names of some non-English language newspapers begin with a word meaning the. In such cases write the newspaper O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt not the O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt newspaper.

nicknames

Use a nickname instead of a given name if that is the preference of the individual concerned, e.g. Tiger Woods.

nighttime

Nissan, Nissen

Nissan cars, Nissen hut.

Nobel Prize, Nobel Prizes

noisome, noisy

Noisome is disgusting to the sight or smell. Do not confuse with noisy, which offends the hearing.

no man’s land

Not no-man’s-land.

no one

Not noone or no-one.

nobility

Hereditary British nobility consists, in descending order of precedence, of dukes, marquises, earls, viscounts and barons. A few women are hereditary countesses or baronesses in their own right. Life peers, whose titles die with them, are also barons. If a well-known person is made a life peer or peeress, you may use their given names at first reference: Lord David Owen and Owen in subsequent references.

The nobility are known collectively as peers (and peeresses), not lords, although the upper house of Parliament is the House of Lords. Dukes get their full title at first reference, e.g. the Duke of Norfolk; second reference Norfolk or the duke. Never Lord Norfolk. His wife is the Duchess of Norfolk, the duchess, never Lady Norfolk.

Refer to all other peers simply as Lord So-and-So, whatever their precise title, and to their wives as Lady So-and-So. But more formal titles may also be used if desired, e.g. the Marquis of Zetland, Earl Cawdor, Viscount Boyd. Barons, whether hereditary or life peers, are always Lord So-and-So. At second reference simply So-and-So, Zetland, Cawdor, Boyd.

Hereditary or life peers, are always Lord So-and-So. At second reference simply So-and-So, Zetland, Cawdor, Boyd. The wife of an earl is a countess, of a viscount a viscountess and of a marquis a marchioness. The children of dukes and marquises and the daughters of earls have the courtesy title of lord or lady before their first names. Do not use the Honorable or the Hon. before the names of the untitled sons of peers.

Baronets (whose titles are hereditary) and knights (whose titles die with them) are known as Sir, e.g. Sir Reginald Barnett. At second reference Barnett. However if you had to distinguish between him and his wife, use Sir Reginald and Lady Barnett respectively. If he is a government minister the preferred style is Sir Reginald Barnett, British health minister, not British Health Minister Sir Reginald Barnett. His wife would be Lady Barnett, whether he was a baronet or a knight.

A dame, equivalent to a knight, is a woman honoured in her own right. At first reference Dame Judi Dench, then Dench.

non-

If the first element of a word is the negative non-, hyphenate, e.g. a non-aggression pact. But nonconformist.

none

As the subject of a sentence, this may be followed by either a singular or plural verb.

nonetheless

Nordic countries

Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Scandinavia comprises only Denmark, Norway and Sweden. Because of the danger of confusion, list the countries even if you use Nordic or Scandinavia in a lead for the sake of brevity.

normalcy

Use normality.

Northern Ireland

Northern is always upper case. Never use Ulster except when quoting someone. The Irish Republican Army, which fought for years to oust Britain from Northern Ireland with an ultimate aim of reunifying the island of Ireland, may be referred to by its initials alone at first reference. It should not be described as a Catholic group. Describe Sinn Fein as the political ally of the IRA. Avoid the word paramilitary and use guerrillas, gunmen or bombers, depending on context. Do not use the word loyalists for Protestant guerrillas unless quoting someone.

notable

Not noteable.

noted

You can note only established facts, not claims or opinions. Avoid the word.

now

A strong and simple word that should always replace flabby phrases such as at the present time and at this time.

nowadays

nuclear power

Some frequently used terms:

becquerel -- Unit of radiation. Because a becquerel is very small, measurements may be in trillions of becquerels. If the term tera becquerel is used, say it means trillions.

criticality -- Point at which a nuclear chain reaction becomes self-sustaining, producing a steady power output.

curie -- Unit measuring the rate at which substances lose radioactivity, or the number of disintegrations per second.

fission -- Process in which the nucleus of an atom is split in the core of a nuclear reactor. Other atoms are split in a chain reaction, releasing large amounts of energy. (The same process as in atomic bombs.) The rate of fission is controlled in a power plant by rods pushed into the core of the reactor, avoiding a runaway chain reaction. Fission increases when the control rods are raised, and the reactor shuts down when they are pushed in fully. The fuel is uranium. Heat created by fission is used to produce steam which drives turbo-generators.

fusion -- Brings atoms together and fuses their nuclei at high temperature to form a single large nucleus, releasing large amounts of energy. The process used in the H-bomb.

half-life -- The time it takes for half of a radioactive material to decay, or lose its radioactivity.

meltdown -- When a nuclear reactor’s core gets so overheated that the fuel melts, raising the possibility of a leakage of radiation.

plutonium -- An artificial metallic element formed from uranium and used as fuel in fast-breeder reactors. It forms as the isotope plutonium-239 but disintegrates to become uranium-235.

rad -- Unit that measures absorbed radiation.

radiation, radioactivity -- Radiation is energy emitted in the form of waves or particles when atomic nuclei disintegrate. Radioactivity is emitted in alpha, beta or gamma rays (the most dangerous) and neutrons. Measured by a Geiger counter. rem (roentgen equivalent man). Measurement of radiation absorbed by humans. An X-ray produces six or seven millirems.

roentgen -- Measurement of the radiation from X-rays or gamma rays.

sievert -- Measures dose of radiation absorbed by humans. One sievert is 100 rems.

uranium -- A radioactive metal. It is enriched by rapid spinning that separates uranium-235, the fuel for nuclear reactors, from uranium-238 (used to make plutonium).

numbers

See figures, fractions.

numerous

many is shorter, better.

numskull

Not numbskull.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 16:43, 27 November 2010.

O

Contents

- 1 OAPEC
- 2 OAS
- 3 oasis, oases
- 4 OAU
- 5 obscenities
- 6 obsolescent, obsolete
- 7 occur, occurring, occurred
- 8 ocean
- 9 octopuses
- 10 OECD
- 11 of/of the
- 12 Off-spinner
- 13 official titles
- 14 officials
- 15 OIC
- 16 oil barrels
- 17 oilfield
- 18 oil statistics
- 19 oil strikes
- 20 OK
- 21 old-time, old-timer, old times
- 22 oligopoly
- 23 Olympiad
- 24 on behalf of
- 25 on to
- 26 one word or two
- 27 ongoing
- 28 online
- 29 only
- 30 OPEC
- 31 opera titles
- 32 opinion polls
- 33 optimum
- 34 ordnance, ordinance
- 35 organisations and institutions
- 36 orient
- 37 Orthodox Church
- 38 Osama bin Laden
- 39 Oscars
- 40 others
- 41 Ottawa
- 42 ounce
- 43 ouster

- 44 out of court,
  out-of-court
- 45 outpatient
- 46 outside
- 47 Oval Office
- 48 over
- 49 overweening
- 50 oxford blue
- 51 oxymoron

OAPEC

Organization of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries (Kuwait). Note the z in Organization. Set up in 1968. Aims to improve economic co-operation in the petroleum industry. Members are Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, and the United Arab Emirates. The group does not as a rule make decisions on oil output or pricing. See www.oapecorg.org

OAS

Organization of American States (Washington). It has 35 active members representing all countries in the Americas except Cuba, which was effectively expelled in 1962 but is still listed as a non-active member. See http://www.oas.org

oasis, oases

OAU

Organisation of African Unity (Addis Ababa). Superseded by African Union.

obscenities

Use them only if they are in direct quotes and if the story would be seriously weakened by their omission. Obscenities, if retained, must not be euphemised or emasculated by the use of dots. In general we should not quote mindless obscenities from the person in the street or, say, an athlete or soldier but should consider using them if people prominent in public life use them in a context that gives their remarks great emphasis or throws in question their fitness to hold office.

obsolescent, obsolete

If something is obsolescent it is on the way to becoming obsolete.

occur, occurring, occurred

ocean

Lower case when used alone or in plurals, e.g. Indian and Pacific oceans. Upper case in Antarctic Ocean, Arctic Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean.

octopuses

Not octopi.

OECD

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD itself uses a hyphen in its formal name) in Paris. Established in 1961 as the successor to Marshall Plan which brought aid to Europe after World War Two. Took on a global role promoting growth and trade in wealthy member states. It gives economic advice to members and non-members. See http://www.oecd.org

of/of the

Can often be excised. The centre of the town becomes the town centre.

Off-spinner

Hyphenated for bowler in cricket.

official titles

Be restrained in using idiomatic phrases to describe officials or official bodies rather than their official titles, e.g. planning overlord, watchdog commission. Such terms are often necessary in lead paragraphs where use of the full title would be clumsy, but the official title must be given in the body of the story. Do not use idioms with pejorative overtones like trade union boss.

officials

Do not describe government ministers as officials.

OIC

Organisation of the Islamic Conference, the principal world organisation of Muslim states, with 57 members. It is funded mainly by Saudi Arabia and based in Jeddah. Among OIC institutions is the Islamic Development Bank which provides soft loans for development projects in Islamic countries. See www.oic-oci.org

oil barrels

A barrel of oil is equivalent to 35 Imperial or 42 U.S. gallons or 159 litres or 0.159 cubic metres. To convert cubic metres or kilolitres (1,000 litres) to barrels multiply by 6.29. Japan often quotes oil statistics in terms of kilolitres. The conversion from barrels (volume) to metric tonnes (weight) depends on the specific gravity, or density, of the oil. The lighter the oil, the more barrels per tonne. To convert Brent crude from barrels to tonnes multiply by 7.57, to convert tonnes to barrels multiply by 0.132. U.S. West Texas Intermediate (WTI) has 7.62 barrels per tonne. For Russian Urals crude, usually expressed in tonnes, multiply by 7.33. Refined petroleum product conversions also vary according to specific gravity. As a rule use 8.6 barrels to a tonne of gasoline, 7.9 barrels per tonne of jet/kerosene, 7.59 barrels per tonne of heating oil, 7.4 barrels per tonne of diesel and 6.4 barrels per tonne of residual fuel oil.

oilfield

One word.

oil statistics

Oil production and export figures are usually expressed in terms of barrels per day (bpd) although they are sometimes quoted also in tonnes per year. Standardise on bpd figures, normally giving them as a bracketed conversion after any figure expressed in tonnes per year. When converting from tonnes per year to bpd don’t forget to divide the barrel figure by 365 for the daily rate. As with all conversions, give an approximate conversion of an approximate figure and do not convert to more decimal places than are given in the original figure.

oil strikes

It is not correct to report the discovery of a new oil well. Nature does not provide ready-made oil wells awaiting discovery.

OK

Not okay. Try to avoid in alerts and headlines. Do not use in text of stories unless you are quoting someone.

old-time, old-timer, old times

oligopoly

A situation where a few firms selling an item control its supply and hence influence its price.

Olympiad

Use only to mean the period of four years between two Olympic Games.

on behalf of

Use by unless you really do mean acting as a representative of or in the interests of.

on to

Two words. Into – one word.

one word or two

Contemporary usage is to prefer one word, with hyphenated words becoming increasingly rare. However, common sense applies. Use a hyphen if it helps to clarify. We should avoid double consonants, double vowels or using double letters if they detract from clarity or are difficult to read eg. Profit-taking is more readable than profittaking. As a general rule, words with "pre-" and "post-" prefixes should be one word. Click here for further guidance on hyphenation and prefixes.

ongoing

Usually tautological as in the ongoing crisis. If you need such a word use continuing.

online

One word for computer connections and the Internet.

only

As a rule only should go immediately before the word or phrase it qualifies. Only SAS flies to the Faroes on Sunday means that on a Sunday SAS is the only airline operating to the islands. SAS flies only to the Faroes on Sunday means that on Sunday the only SAS flight operating is to the islands. SAS flies to the Faroes only on Sunday means that the airline has only one flight a week to

the islands.

OPEC

Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (note definite article and z in Organization). The acronym OPEC can be used at first reference if desired, preferably with a descriptive tag. The title should be given in full at the second reference. Do not use the acronym in brackets immediately after the full reference because it is self-explanatory. It is permissible to refer to OPEC as a cartel because it controls more than 50 percent of world crude trade. OPEC's self-imposed output limit is made up of individual member country supply quotas. Do not say "the OPEC quota" (singular) to describe the cartel's overall output limit. Use output (or supply or production) ceiling or limit. OPEC members are Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates and Venezuela. See www.opec.org

opera titles

See capitalisation.

opinion polls

A story based on the results of an opinion poll should include, as a minimum, the name of the organiser, who published it, the size of the sample, and how and where it was carried out. If available, the margin of error should be given, as well as the survey's history - is it carried out on a regular basis? Do not write stories based on Internet polls, unless they are conducted by a reputable polling organisation. These can be easily manipulated and may be unreliable. For technical reasons, avoid the word poll in the headline, which should be reserved for polls commissioned by Reuters itself.

optimum

Optimum is not a simple superlative which can replace biggest, best or largest. It means the best for the achievement of an aim or result, or the point when any condition is most favourable.

ordnance, ordinance

ordnance is artillery, ordinance a decree.

organisations and institutions

Use the name style that appears on their official websites.

orient

Prefer to orientate. When using to refer to the Far East, capitalise: Oriental cuisine.

Orthodox Church

Eastern Rite Churches returned to communion with Rome after the 1054 East-West split between Rome and Orthodoxy but worship in an Eastern, usually Orthodox rite. Each returned to unity with Rome at a different time in the past 900 years or so.

Osama bin Laden

Use bin Laden at second reference. He has sbeen stripped of Saudi citizenship so refer to as Saudi-born.

Oscars

The statuettes presented annually by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. Also known as the Academy Awards.

others

Beware of this word when reporting such things as casualties. It is usually unnecessary, as in 50 people were killed and 200 others injured.

Ottawa

ounce

To convert to grams roughly multiply by 30, precisely multiply by 28.35. Dry ounce = 28.35 grams, ounce troy = 31.10 grams. Liquid or fluid ounce: UK = 28.4millilitres (20 fluid ounces = 1 pint); US = 29.6 millilitres (16 liquid ounces = 1 liquid pint).

ouster

Except in a legal context the word is ousting. Dismissal or overthrow is better.

out of court, out-of-court

They reached an out-of-court settlement and she was paid out of court.

outpatient

One word.

outside

Never outside of.

Oval Office

White House office of the president.

over

Use 'more than' with numbers. More than 100 rather than over 100. This is often used instead of 'because of' or 'about': Workers are striking over pay. Keep 'over' for place -- over the moon.

overweening

oxford blue

As a colour, lower case. But if an athlete has represented the University, then Oxford Blue.

oxymoron

A figure of speech which deliberately combines opposites, such as bitter-sweet, living dead.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 13:21, 5 October 2008.

P

Contents

- 1 paedophile, pederast
- 2 pail, pale
- 3 palate, palette, pallet
- 4 Palestine Liberation Organisaton
- 5 pan
- 6 panacea
- 7 Panchen Lama
- 8 Panjsher
- 9 Pap smear
- 10 papal nuncio
- 11 paparazzo, paparazzi
- 12 parallel, paralleling, paralleled
- 13 paraplegia
- 14 Paris Club
- 15 Parkinson's disease
- 16 parliament
- 17 parliamentarian
- 18 part time, part-time
- 19 partial, or broken quote
- 20 participate
- 21 participles
- 22 partner
- 23 Pashtun
- 24 passer-by, passers-by
- 25 past, last
- 26 passive
- 27 patrol, patrolling, patrolled
- 28 payroll
- 29 peach Melba
- 30 peal, peel
- 31 pedal, peddle
- 32 peer
- 33 pejorative
- 34 peninsular
- 35 per
- 36 percent
- 37 percentage
- 38 perceptible
- 39 perfect
- 40 period close quote
- 41 period of time
- 42 perk
- 43 Persian
- 44 Persian Gulf
- 45 person, people
- 46 personal, personally, personnel

- 47 personal names
- 48 persuade, convince
- 49 petrol bomb
- 50 Petrodollar
- 51 PGA
- 52 phase, faze
- 53 phenomenon
- 54 phoney
- 55 phosphorus
- 56 picket, picketed, picket line
- 57 picnic, picnicking, picknicked, picknicker
- 58 pidgin English
- 59 pigeonhole
- 60 pilots
- 61 pileup
- 62 PIN
- 63 pious
- 64 plan ahead
- 65 plane
- 66 planets
- 67 plea bargain
- 68 plead, pleading, pleaded
- 69 pled
- 70 PLO
- 71 plough, but American style plow
- 72 plummet
- 73 plurality
- 74 p.m.
- 75 podcast
- 76 podium
- 77 poems
- 78 point-blank
- 79 pointed out
- 80 police
- 81 policymakers
- 82 Polisario Front
- 83 political parties
- 84 politicking
- 85 Polynesia
- 86 pooh-pooh
- 87 Poona
- 88 Pope
- 89 populace
- 90 pore
- 91 port, starboard
- 92 Portuguese names
- 93 posh
- 94 positive
- 95 postmarket

- 96 post mortem
- 97 postpone
- 98 postwar
- 99 potato, potatoes
- 100 pound
- 101 pound sign
- 102 pour, pore
- 103 practice, practise
- 104 pre-
- 105 precautionary measure
- 106 precondition
- 107 pre-dawn
- 108 predominant, predominantly
- 109 predilection
- 110 prefixes
- 111 premarket
- 112 premier
- 113 premiere
- 114 premier league
- 115 premise, premises
- 116 pre-owned
- 117 preplanned
- 118 prepositional phrases
- 119 prescribe
- 120 presently
- 121 President
- 122 Presidents Day
- 123 presidency
- 124 press conference
- 125 press reports
- 126 pressurise
- 127 prestigious
- 128 pretax
- 129 pretence, pretext
- 130 pretension, pretentious
- 131 prevaricate, procrastinate
- 132 prime minister
- 133 prime rate
- 134 primeval
- 135 principal, principle
- 136 prior to
- 137 prise apart, not prize.
- 138 prison officers
- 139 prisoner of war, prisoners of war
- 140 pristine
- 141 prize money
- 142 private equity firm
- 143 privilege, privileged
- 144 proactive
- 145 process

- 146 Procter and Gamble
- 147 proffer, proffered
- 148 profit
- 149 profit-sharing
- 150 profit-taking
- 151 prognosis
- 152 program
- 153 pro-life
- 154 prone, supine
- 155 pronouns
- 156 pronunciation
- 157 propeller
- 158 proper names
- 159 prophecy, prophesy
- 160 proscribe, prescribe
- 161 prostate, prostrate
- 162 protest
- 163 protester
- 164 prototype
- 165 proven
- 166 proverbial
- 167 provost marshal, provost marshals
- 168 public school
- 169 publications
- 170 publicly
- 171 pull back, pullback
- 172 pull out, pullout
- 173 punctuation
- 174 Pune
- 175 punter
- 176 purchase
- 177 push up, push-up
- 178 pygmy
- 179 Pyrrhic victory

paedophile, pederast

A paedophile sexually desires children. A pederast has sexual relations with a boy.

pail, pale

Pail is a small bucket. Pale is wan or light in colour.

palate, palette, pallet

Palate is a sense of taste or part of the mouth. An artist mixes his paints on a palette, and a pallet is a mattress or small bed.

Palestine Liberation Organisaton

Not Palestinian. PLO is acceptable on first reference and spell out in a subsequent reference.

pan

The prefix does not usually take a hyphen. For example – panacea, panoply, pantheism. But Pan-American -- hyphenated when referring to the North, Central and South America region, but not in the official title of the Pan America Games. Also pan-African and pan-European.

panacea

A universal medicine or cure.

Panchen Lama

See Dalai Lama, Tibet.

Panjsher

Not Panjshar or Panjshir, Afghanistan.

Pap smear

Capitalise Pap. A smear test for cancer devised by George Papanicolaou.

papal nuncio

The Holy See's ambassadors around the world are known as papal nuncios and its embassies as nunciatures. If the Holy See does not have formal diplomatic relations with a country the pope's envoy to the church in that country is an apostolic delegate.

paparazzo, paparazzi

parallel, paralleling, paralleled

paraplegia

The total or partial paralysis of both legs. Quadriplegia is the paralysis of all four limbs.

Paris Club

An informal body of 19 creditor nations plus occasional others. It has met in Paris under the chairmanship of the French Treasury since 1956 to help indebted countries reorganise their finances. It treats debt only for those countries with support agreements with the IMF and does so on the condition that other lenders give comparable terms. See also loans, London Club.

Parkinson's disease

parliament

As a general rule refer to legislative assemblies initially as parliaments, regardless of their formal names. These can be given lower in the story, e.g. Prime Minister Tony Blair told parliament ... Replying to questions in the House of Commons, he said ... In American style, capitalise when the name of a formal body, e.g. The British Parliament.

parliamentarian

Member of parliament preferable, although parliamentarian is becoming more widely accepted.

part time, part-time

Two words for the verb, one word for the adjective.

partial, or broken quote

Try to avoid unless the fragment is vital to understanding the importance of meaning.

participate

Use take part.

participles

There are cases in which an unattached participle is acceptable, e.g. Considering the risks involved, you were right to cancel the trip. Although it is not you who is considering the risks but the writer of

the sentence, the sense is clear. But avoid the unattached participle when it makes the sentence absurd, e.g.: Having disarmed, Ruritania's allies guaranteed its defence. Here the participle having disarmed is wrongly attached to the allies when in fact it is Ruritania that has disarmed. Fetching anything between $16,000 and $40,000, only about 2,500 women around the world can afford to buy haute couture dresses. The juxtaposition of fetching and women suggests it is the women not the dresses who are worth $16,000.

partner

Prefer boyfriend, girlfriend or lover.

Pashtun

Not Pushtun, Pushtoon, Pathan. This tribe in Pakistan's Northwest Frontier Province and areas of Afghanistan speaks Pashto, also one of the main languages of Afghanistan.

passer-by, passers-by

past, last

Usually we mean last when we write past. Last refers to the time up to the present. Past is vaguer. Joe Smith has been injured for the last three games not for the past three games, but Eva Petite relived past glories. Also, check for redundancy in phrases such as past history, past record, past achievements.

passive

Avoid the passive voice. It is longer and clumsier than the active voice and often confuses the reader. Write Police arrested five armed men rather than Five armed men were arrested by police. The active voice allows you to push on with the rest of the story. Police arrested five armed men who had stormed a bank in central Paris. If you write Five armed men, who had taken over a bank in central Paris, were arrested by police… you ask readers to retain a great deal of information before they know fully who did what to whom. The passive voice is unavoidable when the subject of an action is the main point of the story. President Jane Flow was shot and killed by... is better than A gunman shot and killed President Jane Flow.

patrol, patrolling, patrolled

payroll

One word ("non-farm payrolls" -- U.S.).

peach Melba

peal, peel

Peal of bells, orange peel.

pedal, peddle

You pedal a bicycle but peddle your wares. A pedaller rides a bicycle, a pedlar sells goods, or peddles door to door. But use the form drug peddler.

peer

An equal.

pejorative

peninsular

This is the adjective. The noun is peninsula. The Peninsular War was fought on the peninsula.

per

Avoid the Latin. Six dollars each rather than six dollers per item.

percent

One word, but the abbreviation pct is acceptable in alerts and headlines. Use numerals before percent, 4 percent, 6 percent etc. Use percent after both numbers when writing about a change, rose to 5 percent from 4 percent, not rose to 5 from 4 percent. Do not confuse percentage with percentage points. If a bank rate rises from one percent to two percent it is a rise of one percentage point and an increase of 100 percent not one percent. Note that a 100 percent increase is twice the original figure, 200 percent three times, 300 percent four times, etc. It is a common error to write, for instance, that a 400 percent rise means a quadrupling; in fact it means a fivefold increase. To calculate percentages divide the first figure by the second and multiply by 100. For example 70 as a percentage of 350 is: 70/350 x 100 = 20 percent. Use a calculator for complicated figures and express the result to the nearest two decimal places, e.g. 75 expressed as a percentage of 350 is 21.42857142 or 21.43 percent. Always use decimals not fractions in percentages.

percentage

Write many or most rather than a large percentage of.

perceptible

perfect

Do not write more perfect or less perfect because things are either perfect or they are not. You can use less than perfect.

period close quote

Periods (full points, full stops) go inside quotation marks unless it is a broken quote, i.e. a phrase or a single word, in which case they go outside the quotation marks.

period of time

Use one word or the other, not both together.

perk

Shortened form of perquisite. Explain as a fringe benefit.

Persian

Generic name for the language spoken in Iran, Tajikistan and northern Afghanistan. It is also known locally as Farsi in Iran, Tajik in Tajikistan and Dari in Afghanistan, but Persian is the preferred overall name.

Persian Gulf

Use Gulf

person, people

Person singular and people plural. Do not use persons.

personal, personally, personnel

Personal or personally, meaning private or individual, is almost always unnecessary, e.g. He personally took his personal belongings. For personnel use people, staff or workers.

personal names

Check names, and then check them again, and then check them again. Never presume you know how to spell a name, no matter how common and how familiar it may seem. Is it Smith, or Smyth or Smythe or Smif? Use a given name and surname when first identifying people, and the surname alone on second reference. Only if a given name is not available or if it is known that an individual prefers to be identified by his initials (e.g. Former South African President F.W. de Klerk) should you use initials. First names that look unfamiliar or odd to English-speaking readers need no special treatment but first names that look like misprints of familiar names, such as Joh or Jame or Arturk may call for repetition at first reference, e.g. Joh (repeat Joh) Bjelke-Petersen. Do not write Joh (ed:correct) Bjelke-Petersen. Be careful with e.g. Evan/Ewan, Michel/Michael. Sports stories and results follow the same rule. Use given name and surname at first reference and the surname alone for subsequent references. To help readers not familiar with names, use a he/she or his/her at second reference to make clear the gender of someone whose name could be of either sex or whose name is not readily known to a non-native, e.g. Clare, Hilary. If you see a story with the same name spelled in different ways, do not assume that the first use is right, or the most frequent use is right, or any or all of them are right. Check with the author. Write declined to be identified not declined to be named. The source already has a name but does not wish to publicise his identity. See also Chinese, Ethiopian, European, Hispanic, Korean, Portuguese, Thai, Vietnamese names.

persuade, convince

You persuade people to do something, convince them of something or that something is the case. Never write convince to.

petrol bomb

A bottle of petrol with a petrol-soaked rag stuffed into the neck. The rag is set alight and the bottle thrown, resulting in a fiery explosion on impact. Do not use Molotov cocktail.

Petrodollar

PGA

Professional Golfers' Association

phase, faze

Phase is a stage in growth or development. Faze is to worry or disturb.

phenomenon

Phenomena is the plural form. Do not use phenomenal if you mean extraordinary or remarkable or just big.

phoney

phosphorus

picket, picketed, picket line

picnic, picnicking, picknicked, picknicker

pidgin English

pigeonhole

Both noun and verb.

pilots

Military aircraft other than strategic bombers and transports normally carry only one pilot. Write the two crew not the two pilots when reporting incidents involving fighter-bombers and the like.

pileup

One word as a noun, two words as a verb.

PIN

Personal identification number. PIN number is tautologous.

pious

Avoid describing someone as e.g. a pious Muslim or a pious Christian. Say practising.

plan ahead

Just plan will do.

plane

Use aircraft, but higher plane, not higher plain.

planets

Capitalise the names of planets.

plea bargain

Noun. Plea-bargain is the verb. The verb is only used intransitively, i.e. not The lawyer plea-bargained the case.

plead, pleading, pleaded

pled

Legalese. Use pleaded.

PLO

Palestine (not Palestinian) Liberation Organisation. PLO is acceptable on first reference. Spell out in a subsequent reference.

plough, but American style plow

plummet

Avoid in market reports unless it is a precipitous decline. A 2-percent fall is not a plummet.

plurality

See majority, plurality.

p.m.

Time, e.g. 3 p.m. or 3:45 p.m.

podcast

podium

A speaker stands behind a lectern (a stand for notes) on a podium and in a pulpit. Several speakers can fit on a dais or rostrum or platform.

poems

As in other works of art, capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner”, “Elegy in a Country Churchyard”, “The Waste Land”.

point-blank

Note hyphen.

pointed out

Avoid this term if the statement is in any way contentious since it suggests that the writer accepts that what the speaker is saying is a fact. Plain said is better.

police

Use police officers, not policemen.

policymakers

One word.

Polisario Front

Algeria-based movement seeking the independence of Western Sahara from Morocco. It fought a low-level war for independence for 16 years after Morocco annexed the territory with the pullout of colonial power Spain in 1975. Its name is the Spanish abbreviation for the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el-Hamra and Rio de Oro.

political parties

Capitalise the names of political parties and of movements with a specific doctrine, e.g. a Communist official, a Democratic senator. Use lower case for non-specific references, e.g. The communist part of the former Soviet Bloc, but the Communist Party of what was then East Germany; the settlement was run on communist principles; he proposed a democratic vote. The name of a political phlosophy should be lower case as noun or adjective, unless it derives from a proper noun: communism, communist, fascism, fascist, but Marxism, Marxist, Nazi, Nazism.

politicking

Polynesia

Polynesia, Melanesia and Micronesia are island groups in the Pacific and sub-regions of Oceania.

pooh-pooh

Poona

Use Pune, India.

Pope

Capitalise only as a title before a name, not when referring to "the pope". See religious titles

populace

The common folk. Does not mean the population

pore

Pour liquid and pore over maps and documents.

port, starboard

Port is left, starboard right in nautical parlance. Use left and right.

Portuguese names

Portuguese and Brazilians, like the Spanish, include the family names both of their father and their mother in their full names. Unlike the Spanish, they put the mother's name before the father's and they normally retain both names at second reference. Where they use one it would always be the patronymic, i.e. the last name. Thus Jose Cabral Nettim could be either Cabral Nettim or Nettim at second reference.

posh

Slang. Avoid.

positive

Avoid as a synonym for good or fruitful.

postmarket

One word.

post mortem

Needs the word examination afterwards -- a post mortem examination. By itself, post mortem means simply 'after death'.

postpone

Events that are called off but will be held later are postponed. Report the new date if possible. Only those events scrapped completely are cancelled. American style uses cancel,canceled, canceling but cancellation.

postwar

No hyphen.

potato, potatoes

pound

The abbreviation lb (with no full stop and the same in the singular and the plural) is acceptable at all references. To convert to grams roughly multiply by 900 and divide by 2, precisely multiply by 454. To convert to kilograms roughly multiply by 9 and divide by 20, precisely multiply by 0.454.

pound sign

Use pounds rather than the Â£ sign to denote sums in pounds sterling, thus 420

pour, pore

Pour liquid and pore over maps and documents.

practice, practise

Practice is the noun, practise the verb, but in American style practice is both noun and verb.

pre-

If the second element of a word beginning with pre- starts with an e, hyphenate, e.g. pre-empt.

precautionary measure

Precaution alone will do.

precondition

Tautological. Condition is enough.

pre-dawn

If something happened shortly before dawn, pre-dawn may be technically correct, but it is a clichÃ© to avoided. Never use it to mean merely that something happened during the night.

predominant, predominantly

Not predominate, predominately.

predilection

prefixes

As a general rule do not hyphenate. The exceptions are if the prefix ends in a vowel and the word that follows starts with the same vowel, e.g. pre-eminence and pre-establish. Cooperate and coordinate are exceptions. If the word that follows a prefix is capitalised then use a hyphen, e.g. trans-Panamanian. Transatlantic and transpacific are exceptions.

premarket

One word.

premier

Use premier for heads of government in states that are part of a larger political entity, e.g. the Australian and German states and the Canadian provinces. Reserve prime minister for the heads of government of sovereign states. Premier may be used for brevity in a headline.

premiere

The debut, opening or first showing of a TV show or film.

premier league

The English premier league is not capitalised.

premise, premises

Premises are always plural when referring to property, but legalistic and best avoided. Prefer an exact description – the house, the factory etc. A premise is a proposition supporting an argument.

pre-owned

Use second-hand.

preplanned

Tautological. Planned is enough.

prepositional phrases

Phrases that start and end with a preposition are usually verbose. Avoid expressions like: in order to ... in accordance with ... at this moment ... in respect to ... in receipt of ... with a view to … in connection with ... in the wake of … apprehension as to the outcome.

prescribe

Prescribe is to set down as an order, proscribe is to prohibit.

presently

Use to mean in a short time or soon, rather than now or at present. Present and presently are usually redundant when used to mean what is happening now.

President

Capitalise only when a formal title before a name.

Presidents Day

No apostrophe. Unofficial name of the holiday celebrating George Washington's birthday, and observed on the third Monday in February. This usage comes up in our copy at least one day a year.

presidency

Lower case.

press conference

Use news conference unless broadcast journalists, photographer and camera operators have been excluded.

press reports

When picking up newspaper, radio or television reports, name the source. Do not refer just to press reports. Quoting a news report does not exonerate journalists from responsibility to be accurate, balanced and not defamatory. We should make every effort to check a pick-up – even ... not available to comment... shows an effort was made. Insert relevant background and give some indication of the political stance, reliability and potential for bias of the source.

pressurise

Use press or pressure unless speaking of industrial processes.

prestigious

Avoid this pompous and often tautological word. If something is prestigious, or famous, then we need hardly say so.

pretax

One word, no hyphen.

pretence, pretext

A pretence is a false show, a sham or a false allegation. A pretext is an ostensible motive put forward to conceal the real one. Pretense is the American style.

pretension, pretentious

prevaricate, procrastinate

Prevaricate is to mislead or lie. Procrastinate is to delay or defer.

prime minister

Capitalise the title when it immediately precedes the person’s name. When the title follows the name or is used alone, use lower case, e.g.: French Prime Minister Jacques Dupont; Jacques Dupont, the French prime minister. But The president said: “I would like to welcome the Manchukistan prime minister, Stefan Hartzjand.”

prime rate

In the United States prime rate is a benchmark reference for determining interest rates on short-term loans to high-quality large borrowers. The actual rate could be lower but more often it is higher than the benchmark. Sometimes used erroneously to imply it is the bank's lowest rate.

primeval

principal, principle

Principle is always a noun, meaning a fundamental basis or truth. Principal can be an adjective, meaning chief, or a noun meaning chief person, as in principal of a school or capital sum, as in debt principal.

prior to

Prefer before.

prise apart, not prize.

prison officers

Not jailers or warders.

prisoner of war, prisoners of war

Hyphenate when a compound modifier: prisoner-of-war camp.

pristine

Pristine means belonging to the earliest period or in its original state. It does not mean just clean.

prize money

Two words.

private equity firm

Three words.

privilege, privileged

Not priviledged.

proactive

Prefer active or energetic.

process

Can usually be excised in phrases such as development process. Prefer active or energetic.

Procter and Gamble

Not Proctor and Gamble.

proffer, proffered

profit

Not profits.

profit-sharing

Hyphenated for both noun and adjective.

profit-taking

Hyphenated for both noun and adjective.

prognosis

Prognosis is forecasting, or a forecast, especially of a disease.

program

Use this spelling only in stories about computers and for stock market program trading. Otherwise progamme. In American style, program is for all uses.

pro-life

Use anti-abortion.

prone, supine

Prone, like prostrate, means lying face down. Supine is face up.

pronouns

Use neuter pronouns for countries, ships, cars, aircraft, animals, etc., e.g. Portugal and its territories, Aboard the liner when it sailed. The occasional bright story may be enhanced by the use of a feminine or masculine pronoun to personalise a machine or animal, but these should be rare exceptions.

pronunciation

When a difficult personal or place name appears on the file for the first time, radio and television subscribers by giving a guide to pronunciation. Assume familiarity with the principles guiding pronunciation of European languages like English, French, German, Italian and Spanish and need not provide guides to pronunciation of most names phonetically transcribed from another script, e.g. Arabic or Japanese. Give guidance in brackets after the name, hyphenating the syllables and capitalising the syllable stressed, e.g. General Michel Aoun (pronounced OW-oon), a rail strike in Bydgoszcz (pronounced BID-gosh).

propeller

proper names

If proper names are in English use the style and spelling as it appears on the organisation’s own nameplate and business cards, e.g. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Scottish Labour Party, U.S. Department of Defense. If proper names are translated into English use the spelling convention of that region.

prophecy, prophesy

I make a prophecy when I prophesy. The noun is prophecy, the verb is prophesy.

proscribe, prescribe

Proscribe is to prohibit, prescribe to set down as an order.

prostate, prostrate

Prostate is a gland, prostrate is lying face down.

protest

Protest against a government or protest about a policy. If it is a solemn declaration rather than an act of disapproval then protest the faith or protest his innocence. Do not write a protest when you are describing a demonstration. American style drops the adverb for the verb of disapproval, protest the policy.

protester

Not protestor. But demonstrator.

prototype

The original model. Do not qualify, as in the first prototype or an early prototype.

proven

Use proved except in two cases: in writing of oil reserves or of the Scottish legal verdict not proven (neither guilty nor not guilty).

proverbial

Best excised. If you are using or describing a proverb then there is no need to say so.

provost marshal, provost marshals

public school

In some countries this term refers to a private or fee-paying school as opposed to a state or government school. Use only when quoting someone and then explain it.

publications

No quotation marks around the title. Capitalise articles and particles in the names of English-language newspapers and magazines, e.g. The New York Times, The News of the World. The names of some non-English language newspapers begin with a word meaning the. In such cases write O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt not the O Globo/Le Monde/Die Welt newspaper.

publicly

Not publically.

pull back, pullback

Two words for the verb, one for the noun.

pull out, pullout

Two words for the verb, one for the noun.

punctuation

- **apostrophes**: Use the apostrophe according to the following rules, unless to do so would lead to a word that looked or sounded very strange.

Singular words and plural words not ending in s form the possessive by adding ‘s, e.g. Boeing’s new airliner, the children’s books. Plural words already ending in s form the possessive by adding the apostrophe alone, e.g. the soldiers’ weapons.

There is usually no problem about using the apostrophe with words ending in s. the class’s performance, the princesses’ return, Shultz’s car are all acceptable because they can be pronounced easily. Some words would look or sound so odd, e.g. the Dukakises' son, Paris’s reputation, Tunis’s main prison or Woolworths’s results that it best to write your way out of trouble. Recast such phrases, e.g. the son of the Dukasises, the reputation of Paris, the main prison in Tunis and results from Woolworths. Companies which end in s like Qantas or Optus might also appear ugly with the ‘s possessive. The best option is to avoid if possible.

Note that it’s is a contraction of it is. The possessive form of it is its.

Do not use an apostrophe in words like the 1990s or abbreviations like NCOs.

- **brackets**: If an entire sentence is in brackets, put the full stop (period) inside the closing bracket, e.g. (...reported earlier.) If a sentence has a bracketed section at the end, the full stop goes outside the closing bracket, e.g. -reported earlier). If a bracketed section in the middle of a sentence is followed by a comma, it also goes outside the bracket.

- **colons**: Use a colon before directly quoting a complete sentence and as a signal that you are about to list things advertised in the preceding words, e.g. ... these were: three French hens, two turtle doves and a partridge in a pear tree. Put the word following a colon in lower case unless the next word is a proper name, a direct quotation or the beginning of a sentence.

- **commas**: Do not over-punctuate, especially with commas. Any sentence studded with commas could probably benefit from a rewrite. Use commas as a guide to sense, to break a sentence into logically discrete parts, but do not use them to the extent that they break the sentence flow.

Use commas to mark off words and phrases that are in apposition to, or define other words or phrases in the sentence e.g. Herve de Charette, French foreign minister, said ... Rudolf Nureyev, most prominent of the defectors from the Bolshoi, has danced …

Use commas to mark off a clause that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence, e.g. The airliner, which was seven years old, crashed ... But a clause that cannot be removed from the sentence without affecting its meaning is not marked off by commas, e.g. The airliner that crashed on Thursday was seven years old but the plane lost the previous day was brand new.

Use commas to separate items in a list, e.g. cheese, fruit, wine and coffee or Smith despised ballet, hated the theatre and was bored by opera. Note that there is normally no comma before the final and. However, a comma should be used in this position if to leave it out would risk ambiguity, e.g. He admired Irving Berlin, Rodgers and Hart, and Leonard Bernstein.

A comma follows an initial however. But as long as there is no risk of ambiguity there is no need for the comma after opening phrases like On Wednesday the committee decided ... In the first four months of 2002 Britain exported ...

- **dashes**: Use dashes sparingly, never to set off relative clauses in a sentence. For the sake of clarity, dashes should be double (–) and hyphens single (-). Dashes are followed by lower case unless they are used to label sections of a list The study concluded: – Almost half had more exports this year than last. – In 1995, a third had less imports than in 1994. – One in five expects better terms of trade in 1996.

- **hyphenation**: Use the hyphen if its omission might lead to ambiguity, e.g. three year-old horses is quite different from three-year-old horses. Use caution in headlines: False jailing claim delayed or False-jailing claim delayed?

Hyphens tend to erode with time and many words once hyphenated are now generally written unhyphenated e.g. ceasefire, cooperation, gunrunner, machinegun.

Use a hyphen to show that two or more words are to be read together as a single word with its own meaning, different from that of the individual words, e.g. extra-judicial duties (duties other than judicial ones) as opposed to extra judicial duties (additional judicial duties).

Do not hyphenate an adjective and a noun when they stand alone, e.g. the left wing of the party. If the adjective and noun are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a first-class result, the left-wing party. Hyphenate numbers and nouns or adjectives when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a six-cylinder car, a one-armed man. Do not hyphenate adjectives used to form comparatives or superlatives, e.g. the most desirable outcome, the least likely result, the more obvious solution.

Do not hyphenate an adverb and adjective when they stand alone, e.g. The artist was well known. If the adverb and adjective are paired to form a new adjective, they are hyphenated, e.g. a well-known artist. Do not do so if the adverb ends in -ly, e.g. a poorly planned operation.

Hyphenate two adjectives or an adjective and a present or past participle when they are paired to form a new adjective, e.g. a dark-blue dress, a good-looking man, a well-tailored suit.

Do not hyphenate very with an adjective. He is a very good man.

If the second element in a word is capitalised, hyphenate, e.g. anti-Semitism. Transatlantic is an exception.

If pre- or re- is followed by an element beginning with e, hyphenate e.g. pre-empt, re-employ.

If the first element of a word is the negative non-, hyphenate, e.g. a non-aggression pact (but nonconformist).

Where two nouns are paired to form another noun, hyphenate if their original distinct meanings are still clearly retained, e.g. actor-manager. Otherwise do not hyphenate, e.g. housekeeper.

Where a verb and adverb are paired to form a noun, hyphenate if the verb ends and the adverb begins with a vowel, e.g. cave-in, flare-up.

Hyphenate titles when the first word is a preposition, e.g. under-secretary, vice-admiral, or when a noun is followed by an adjective, e.g. attorney-general. (However official U.S. titles are not hyphenated, e.g. the US. Attorney General.) Do not hyphenate when the noun follows the adjective, e.g. second lieutenant.

Hyphenate fractions, e.g. three-quarter, two-thirds.

Hyphenate secondary compass points, e.g. south-southwest but not main ones e.g. southwest.

Hyphenate compound words when not to do so would result in an ugly sound or confusion of meaning, e.g. cross-section, sea-eagle.

Hyphenate both terms in phrases such as short- and medium-range missiles. If a figure being converted is hyphenated make sure that the figure in the conversion is also, e.g. within a 10-mile (six-km) radius.

Pune

Not Poona, India.

punter

Prefer gambler, not bettor which is unfamiliar outside the Americas. Do not use in financial stories as a synonym for investors or speculators unless it is in quotes, in which case explain.

purchase

buy is shorter and better.

push up, push-up

Two words for the verb, one word for the noun.

pygmy

Lower case if you mean small, as in pygmy hippopotamus, but upper case for members of specific human groups in Asia and Africa.

Pyrrhic victory

At great cost to the victor.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 12:24, 10 November 2010.

Q

Contents

- 1 QE2, QM2
- 2 quadriplegia
- 3 quadruped
- 4 Quakers
- 5 quandary
- 6 quantum leap
- 7 quarter-final
- 8 queen
- 9 question marks
- 10 quip
- 11 quite
- 12 quotations

QE2, QM2

The only acceptable abbreviations for the liners Queen Elizabeth 2 and Queen Mary 2. They may be used at first reference. The QE2 is due to end active service in late 2008.

quadriplegia

The paralysis of all four limbs as opposed to paraplegia, the total or partial paralysis of both legs.

quadruped

Quakers

Permissible in stories about the Religious Society of Friends. Spell out the full name if the story is about the religious movement or its activities.

quandary

quantum leap

Avoid. It means a sudden and spectacular advance, which is clearer than quantum leap. Strictly quantum simply means a quantity or a specified portion, and in physics the smallest amount of a physical quantity that can exist independently.

quarter-final

Hyphenated.

queen

Queen Elizabeth at first reference and the queen or Queen Elizabeth at second reference.

question marks

Do not use question marks in headlines where, if they are accidentally dropped, the meaning can be changed from a possibility to a fact.

quip

The president/prime minister quipped... is a phrase almost invariably followed by something that is not funny. Avoid both quip and third-rate humour.

quite

Avoid. It can be expressed more clearly and it is ambiguous. In American usage it means very and in European usage it can mean just a little or only moderately.

quotations

Quotes are sacred. Do not alter anything put in quotation marks other than to delete words, and then only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote. Quotes personalise stories and give them immediacy. Try to inject a quote into the first three paragraphs of any story where it is appropriate.

Before starting a quote, use a colon. He said: "I don't think so", not He said, "I don't think so".

Delete routine obscenities.

Show deletions from a quoted text with three full stops with a space before and after, e.g. He said: “We will win by fair means or foul ... and the devil take the hindmost.”

If the words omitted are at the end of a sentence and are followed by another sentence in quotation marks, then the next word is capitalised to show the start of a new sentence. “We will fight and we will win ... We will never surrender.” You may drop words in this way only if the deletion does not alter the sense of the quote.

To background or explain a quote, do so in a separate paragraph or by bracketing a phrase into the quoted remarks, e.g. He said: “They (the Khmer Rouge) are bound to fail.”

When quoting the same source for a lengthy statement there is no need to repeat the source paragraph by paragraph as long as there is no doubt who is speaking.

Do not run one person’s quote into another’s. Use a bridging sentence or phrase to make the transition from one source to the next clear to the reader e.g. “The world is round,” said Smith, but Jones disagreed: “It is round,” Jones said.

Avoid quotes in colloquial or parochial language not easily translated or understood in other countries. If you do give such quotes, explain what they mean, e.g. He said: “Clinton is behind the eight ball (in a difficult situation).”

In a quote spell out what is actually spoken rather than using customary style abbreviations. It is better to write “The president does not think that Doctor Williams needs to resign,” he said, rather than “The president does not think that Dr Williams needs to resign,” he said.

When translating quotes from another language into English, do so in an idiomatic way rather than with pedantic literalness. However, give a literal translation if a statement is tendentious and likely to be the subject of close analysis.

Avoid excessive use of direct quotes in English when a speaker has spoken in another language.

The full stop goes inside the quotation marks when the quotation is a complete sentence. "The president told us 'I will not raise your taxes'. But he did". It goes outside the quotation marks when the quotation is the final part of the sentence. "The president told us 'I will not raise your taxes'."

When the quotation precedes the source put the comma inside the quotation marks. “We have no choice but to increase taxes,” the president said.

Quote the titles of films, plays and books but not of ships, aircraft, newspapers or magazines.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 12:20, 10 November 2010.

R

Contents

- 1 raccoon
- 2 race
- 3 rack, wrack
- 4 racket
- 5 radical
- 6 Ramadan
- 7 rand
- 8 ranges
- 9 rape victims
- 10 rapt, wrapped
- 11 rarefied
- 12 ravage, ravish
- 13 razed to the ground
- 14 re-
- 15 realtor
- 16 reassure
- 17 rebut, refute
- 18 recession
- 19 reckless
- 20 reconnaissance
- 21 record
- 22 recur, recurring, recurred
- 23 Red Cross
- 24 re-elect, re-election
- 25 refer
- 26 referendum, referendums
- 27 refute
- 28 regime
- 29 register office, not registry office.
- 30 reins, reigns
- 31 reiterate again
- 32 relatively
- 33 religion, religious titles
- 34 religious terms
- 35 reluctant, reticent
- 36 remain, remained
- 37 remainder
- 38 rendezvous
- 39 repeat, repetition
- 40 repechage
- 41 repellent
- 42 replica
- 43 reported, reportedly
- 44 report
- 45 reports

- 46 requirements
- 47 resistible, irresistible
- 48 responsible
- 49 restaurateur
- 50 result in
- 51 Reuters name
- 52 reveal
- 53 revenue
- 54 Reverend
- 55 revert back
- 56 rhinoceros, rhinoceroses
- 57 Richter scale
- 58 rifle, riffle
- 59 right wing
- 60 rigmarole
- 61 road map
- 62 rock'n'roll
- 63 rocks
- 64 Rolls-Royce
- 65 Roma
- 66 Roman Catholic Church
- 67 Romania
- 68 Roman Numerals
- 69 roofs
- 70 roro
- 71 Rosh Hashanah
- 72 round up, roundup
- 73 round robin
- 74 rounding figures
- 75 row
- 76 royalty
- 77 rubber stamp, rubber-stamp
- 78 rule
- 79 run for office
- 80 rundown, run down
- 81 runner-up, runners-up
- 82 rush hour, rush-hour
- 83 rushed to hospital

raccoon

race

Reuters stories should be free of conscious or unconscious racism. Avoid racial stereotyping and describe membership of a group, ethnicity or race precisely. For further guidance, go to the sections on value judgments and religious, cultural and national differences under Specialised Guidance.

Mention race or ethnicity only when relevant to the understanding of a story. For example, if someone is facing deportation, it is appropriate to give his or her nationality. Similarly, the ethnic origin of a person who receives racial threats or is the target of a racist attack is essential context.

Take care when reporting crimes and court cases. The race of an accused person is not usually relevant.

Clearly, race is an important factor in stories about racial controversy or immigration, or where an issue cuts across racial lines. For example, if European-born people join Tibetan exiles in demonstrations against China's Tibet policy, this is a point worth mentioning.

Race is pertinent in reporting a feat or appointment unusual for a person of a particular ethnic group, for example someone born in China who becomes an international cricket umpire. In the United States, the terms black and African-American are both acceptable. Black is fine as an adjective, eg "Obama will be the first black U.S. president". As a noun, the plural is acceptable where it might contrast with another group, eg doctors found differences between the treatment offered to whites and blacks. Do not use black as a singular noun -- it is both awkward and offensive. "Barack Obama would be the first black to become U.S. president" is unacceptable. Better to say "Barack Obama will become the first black U.S. president". Native Spanish speakers in the United States may be referred to as Latino or Hispanic, but it is better to be specific (Colombian, Mexican). Also, some people from Latin America are not Hispanic, eg Brazilians. As a general rule, use the term by which the people of a particular ethnic group describe themselves: Inuit (not Eskimo), Roma (not Gypsy), Sami (not Lapp), Native American (not Indian).

Capitalise the names of races and peoples: Asian, Jew, Hispanic. Note that black and white are lower case.

If a racially derogatory expression is used in a direct quote, this should be flagged at the top of the story:(Note racial slur in paragraph 12)

rack, wrack

Use wrack only for seaweed and in the phrase wrack and ruin. Otherwise use rack, e.g. racked with pain.

racket

Not racquet.

radical

Avoid this word in a political context.

Ramadan

The month of fasting when devout Muslims refrain from all food, drink or sex during daylight hours and focus on devotion and good works. The majority Sunnis fast between dawn and sunset, the Shia from dawn to dusk. The start and end of the month for most Islamic countries depends on the sighting of the new moon by the naked eye. It is the ninth and holiest month of the Islamic, lunar calendar. Eid al-Fitr is the holiday celebrated at the end of Ramadan.

rand

No "s" in plural.

ranges

$22 million to $26 million, not $22 to $26 million.

rape victims

In many countries it is illegal to report the names of victims of sexual crime. Standardise globally to say we do NOT name victims.

rapt, wrapped

Rapt is entranced or wholly engrossed, wrapped is folded together or enfolded.

rarefied

ravage, ravish

Ravage is to lay waste or pillage. Ravish is to abduct or to rape. You ravage a village and ravish a maiden.

razed to the ground

Tautologous. Razed will do.

re-

If the second element of a word beginning with re- starts with an e, hyphenate, e.g. re-employ, re-elected.

realtor

Use real estate agenct

reassure

Use this word with caution. It means to give a new assurance. It does not mean (e.g. Hitler reassured Czechoslovakia that he had no designs on its territory) that the person to whom the assurance is given is necessarily reassured. Better to write again assured.

rebut, refute

Use with care. Refute means to disprove, not to deny or reject. Rebut has a similar meaning, not just to argue against, so its use implies an editorial judgment. Avoid, except in quotes, unless we are really sure we are using them correctly. Deny or reject may be preferred.

recession

A period of low economic activity with high unemployment and numerous business failures. There are varying definitions. In the United States it is two consecutive quarterly falls in gross domestic product.

reckless

Not wreckless.

reconnaissance

record

By definition any record just set is new, so do not write a new world record.

recur, recurring, recurred

Red Cross

The Red Cross movement comprises: the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC); the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (formerly the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies); and more than 160 national societies around the world. Both the ICRC (founded in 1863 and still almost exclusively composed of Swiss citizens) and the federation (1919) are based in Geneva. The ICRC helps victims of war and internal conflicts. The federation, which groups the 160-plus national societies, brings relief to victims of natural disasters and helps care for refugees outside areas of conflict. The ICRC's work in protecting wounded and sick servicemen, prisoners of war and civilians in times of armed conflict is based on international humanitarian law enshrined in the four Geneva conventions of 1949 and two protocols signed in 1977. Give the ICRC title in full at first reference; do not abbreviate to the 'International Red Cross' since such a body does not exist. For the sake of brevity in a lead paragraph you can refer to a Red Cross official or spokesman as long as you make clear lower in the story which organisation he belongs to. See www.icrc.org and www.ifrc.org

re-elect, re-election

refer

Refer means to mention directly. Allude means to refer to in passing without making an explicit mention. He alluded to the sins of his past and referred to his criminal record.

referendum, referendums

refute

Use with care. Refute means to disprove, not to deny or reject. Rebut has a similar meaning, not just to argue against, so its use implies an editorial judgment. Avoid, except in quotes, unless we are really sure we are using them correctly. Deny or reject may be preferred.

regime

A word with negative overtones in a political context. Use government.

register office, not registry office.

reins, reigns

Reins control a horse. A monarch reigns.

reiterate again

A tautology. Just reiterate will do.

relatively

Do not use unless in a comparison. Do not write He is relatively young. Compared to whom? He is younger than the rest of the team.

religion, religious titles

Religion: Names of divinities are capitalised but unspecific plurals are lower case, e.g. Allah, the Almighty, Christ, God, Jehovah, the Deity, the Holy Trinity, but the gods, the lords of the universe. Capitalise religious titles when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Bishop Thaddeus Smith, Dean Robert Jones, but the bishop, the dean. Use only the simplest and best-known titles at first reference, e.g. the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr John Smith rather than the Right Rev. John Smith. Capitalise names of denominations and religious movements, e.g. Baptist, Buddhist, Christian, Church of England, Islamic, Jew, Jewish, Muslim, Orthodox. But non-denominational references are lower case, e.g. adult baptism, orthodox beliefs, built a temple. The Pope is head of the Roman Catholic Church or of the Church (that is, the whole body of Roman Catholics) but he would celebrate mass in a Roman Catholic church (that is, a building). A baptist is someone who baptises. A Baptist is a member of the Protestant denomination. With more than 20 separate Baptist church groups in the United States, it is incorrect to refer to the Baptist Church as a singular entity. The correct reference would be to Baptist Churches or to the specific Baptist group involved, e.g. the Southern Baptist Convention.

religious terms

- **abaya**: Full-body overgarment worn by some Muslim women to cover all but their face, feet and hands. Most frequent in Arab countries.

- **adhan**:The Muslim call to prayer

- **Anglican Communion**: The worldwide association of Anglican and Episcopal churches. Not the Worldwide Anglican Communion.

- **Baha'i faith**: A syncretic religion that preaches the unity of all mankind and all spiritual beliefs. It recognises many major religious figures of history -- including Abraham, Moses, Buddha, Krishna, Zoroaster, Jesus, Mohammad and its founder Baha'ullah -- as authentic messengers of God helping to bring humanity to spiritual maturity. Divine revelation continues, according to their teaching, with the Baha'i faith being only the latest religion to emerge from it. The Baha'is, who claim about five million followers, began in 19th century Iran but have since spread around the world.

  The Baha'i faith emerged from Shi'ite Islam, but we should not refer to this origin when we describe it. Despite retaining some elements of Shi'ite Islam, the Baha'i faith also took in many other ideas that made it a separate religion on its own. Calling it an offshoot of Islam is

like calling Christianity an offshoot of Judaism; it is correct in a very limited sense but misleading overall. The religious authorities in Shi'ite Iran consider the Baha'is heretics. The Baha'is accuse Iran of oppressing them.

- **basilica**: A major church with special status, not necessarily a cathedral, which is the church of a bishop.

- **burqa**: A one-piece head-to-toe covering for Muslim women, with a headband to hold it in place and a cloth mesh to cover the face but allow vision. Most frequent in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Some European languages use burqa for other kinds of covering, but avoid this usage.

- **cardinal**: Honorary title for Catholic clerics who elect the next pope if they are under 80. Most but not all are archbishops. New cardinals are made at a consistory.

- **cathedral**: Central church of a diocese and seat of the bishop. Not a generic term for any large church.

- **chador**: Full-length cloak for Muslim women that covers the head and body but leaves the face visible. Worn over a loose-fitting blouse and pants, it is open in front and held together by the wearer. Usually worn in Iran, mostly in black.

- **Christian**: Use as an overall term, but not as a substitute for a precise name of a denomination. If possible, it is perferable to name the denomination, e.g. Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, etc. Protestant and Orthodox are also overall terms and more precision, for example Methodist or Greek Orthodox, is preferable.

- **church, Church**: A church is a house of prayer or a denomination. Capitalise when used in a title. In a story about a single church, “the Church” can be used to refer to the whole denomination on second reference and “Church” can be used as an adjective to mean belonging to that church.

- **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints**: The Mormon church. “Mormon church” acceptable on first reference, but give the official title soon afterward.

- **cult**: Refers to a faith group far from the religious mainstream, implying a charismatic leader and possibly extreme views. Use very carefully.

- **denomination**: Term for the different Christian churches, usually used for Protestant churches. Catholics and Orthodox object to being called denominations.

- **Eastern Catholic churches**: Eastern Rite churches, the ancient Middle Eastern churches in communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

- **ecumenism**: Cooperation among Christian churches. “Inter-faith” refers to cooperation among religions.

- **Episcopal Church, Episcopal, Episcopalian**: The Episcopal Church is the U.S. branch of Anglicanism. “Episcopal” is the adjective referring to it and Episcopalian is the noun referring to its members. Do not refer to its members as “Episcopals”. This is one of the most frequent mistakes made on the religion file.

- **evangelical**: A term for Protestants who stress personal conversion (“born again”) and the authority of the Bible. Evangelicals embrace modern culture, even if they are socially conservative, while fundamentalists try to avoid what they see as sinful modern ways. Evangelicals are found in several churches. Note in Europe, especially Germany, evangelical is a general term for mainstream Protestant. Uppercase only when in a title.

- **evangelism, evangelising**: A neutral term for spreading the Gospel. Proselytise has negative connotations.

- **evangelist**: Originally, one of the four authors of the Gospels. Also, a preacher whose sermons aim to convert listeners to Christianity. If a cleric heads a church of already converted Christians, call him or her a preacher, not an evangelist.

- **Father**: For Catholic priests, only use if in a quote. Rev. is the proper title for a priest.

- **fundamentalist**: Originally refers to Protestants who stress the fundamentals of their faith and reject liberal interpretations. Often used for conservatives, especially for Muslims, but so overused that it is best avoided. Alternatives are traditionalist, orthodox, conservative, etc.

- **Haj**: Capitalise. A Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca

- **headscarf**: General term for Muslim women’s head covering, either the hijab (covering just the hair) or the niqab (covering the face but leaving the eyes open).

- **hijab**: Muslim headscarf for women to cover the hair but leave the face open. Some styles also cover the neck and shoulders.

- **Mass**: The central service of Catholic worship. It is celebrated or said

- **Methodist churches**: Methodist churches are Protestant churches that trace their origins to an 18th-century Church of England revival movement led by John Wesley. There are many separate churches in the Methodist family, which at about 75 million members worldwide is one of the largest Christian traditions. Some but not all Methodist churches are part of the evangelical movement. There are over 40 Methodist denominations in the United States, including the United Methodist Church (the largest) and several African-American Methodist churches. The Methodist Church of Great Britain is the largest one in the United Kingdom.

- **minister**: Term for a cleric in many Protestant denominations. It is not a title and should not be capitalised.

- **Monsignor**: An honorary Roman Catholic title that is better avoided because it has two meanings. In Romance languages, it tends to be a general honorific for all prelates, up to cardinal. In some other languages, it is used as a rank between priest and bishop. Use the cleric’s actual title (e.g. bishop, archbishop, cardinal) or Rev. if he is below episcopal rank.

- **new religious movement**: Neutral term to describe a faith group outside the religious mainstream.

- **niqab**: Muslim woman’s full head and face covering that leaves only the eyes open.

- **Orthodox, orthodox**: Capitalise in titles such as Orthodox Church or Orthodox Judaism. Lower case to denote strict adherence to the doctrines of a religion.

- **pontiff**: A synonym for the pope, always lower case.

- **Pope, pope**: Upper case for the title, e.g. Pope Benedict, but lower case for the term “the pope.”

- **proselytise**: To seek converts to a faith. Some Christian denominations say it has a negative connotation, implying the use of aggressive or unethical methods such as threats or rewards, and prefer “evangelise” as a more neutral term.

- **Roman Catholic Church**: Official title, although Catholic Church can also be used.

The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the pope. Refer to a reigning pope at first reference as e.g. Pope Benedict and at subsequent references as the pope or the pontiff. A reigning pope does not take Roman numerals after his name in Reuters copy unless to omit them would cause confusion. Past Church leaders should take Roman numerals after their name on first reference e.g. Pope Pius XII and may be referred to simply by their name e.g. Pius, on subsequent references unless to omit the numerals would cause confusion.

The pope’s closest advisers are known as cardinals, who are appointed by him. Those under 80 can enter a conclave to elect a new pope. At first reference Cardinal John Doe. At subsequent references the cardinal or Doe. A high-ranking member of the Church, such as a cardinal, an archbishop or a bishop, can be referred to subsequently as a prelate. It’s best to avoid the term monsignor since it means a rank between priest and bishop (e.g. Monsignor Martin Smith) in some countries but in others, especially Italy, France and Spain and in Latin America, it is a catchall title used for monsignors, bishops, archbishops and cardinals, e.g. the Archbishop of Bogota, Monsignor Enrique Perez. Avoid this usage also. Use Boston Archbishop Charles Dust. For priests, use Rev. John Doe, not Father John Doe (except in quotes). Do not use the Rev., Reverend or Most Reverend.

The Church hierarchy is: priest, pastor, pastor, bishop, archbishop, cardinal, pope. The Church government working in the Vatican is known as the Curia, which must be explained if used. The Vatican technically refers to the city-state in Rome and the Holy See to the Church’s central administration, but the terms have become interchangeable in common use. The Holy See’s ambassadors around the world are known as papal nuncios and its embassies as nunciatures. If the Holy See does not have formal diplomatic relations with a country the Pope’s envoy to the church in that country is an apostolic delegate.

- **sect**: A religious group that has broken off from a larger one. Use carefully as it has negative connotations. The neutral term is new religious movement.

- **skullcap**: Preferred generic term for small religious headpiece known as the Jewish kippa, Catholic zucchetto or Musilm kufi. Avoid yarmulke, which is a Yiddish term used mostly in the United States.

- **temple**: A non-Christian house of prayer. Some Jews use it for synagogue, but the latter is preferred.

- **Unification Church**: Founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in South Korea in 1954, the Unification Church is a religious movement that has expanded around the world and is believed to have up to three million members. Members have been dubbed "Moonies" by their critics, but this is a pejorative term which we should not use in copy and avoid in direct quotation if possible. The movements's goals include the defence of conservative family values and it regularly organises mass public weddings of couples brought together by the church. It has links to many businesses, especially in publishing (Washington Times, UPI), and has been accused by critics of being a cult, brainwashing members and enriching its leaders, all of which it denies. It teaches that Rev. Moon received private revelations from Jesus, Mosus and Buddha to fight communism and promote world peace. "Moonie" is a perjorative term for members of the Unification Church. We should not use it in copy and avoid it when possible in direct quotations.

- **Virgin Mary**: Use this title or the Madonna, not Our Lady except in titles such as Our Lady of Czestochowa or in the names of churches. In Catholicism, do not confuse the Virgin Birth (the dogma that Mary was a virgin when she gave birth to Jesus) with the Immaculate Conception (the dogma that Mary was the only human conceived without Original Sin).

- **yarmulke**: Use skullcap.

reluctant, reticent

Reluctant is unwilling or resisting. Reticent is sparing in communication. A gossip is reluctant to be reticent.

remain, remained

Avoid in leads. There is always a more lively way of phrasing.

remainder

Use the rest.

rendezvous

Singular and plural. Prefer meeting or appointment.

repeat, repetition

The noun is repetition, the verb is repeat. John Smith tried to avoid a repetition of his blunder, not a repeat of his blunder. Repeat again is tautologous unless something is being said or done more than twice. Just repeat will do.

repechage

In sport, a contest between runners-up, usually for a place in the final (especially in rowing).

repellent

replica

An exact reproduction, in size and materials. Do not confuse with model.

reported, reportedly

If you use the word reported without stating the source at once, you must give it in the next sentence or paragraph. Do not use reportedly.

report

Report on, not into.

reports

Do not refer to just to reports, unconfirmed or otherwise. Specify where the reports are coming from or originate.

requirements

needs is shorter and better.

resistible, irresistible

responsible

Only people are responsible for the effects of their actions. Things cause things to happen. Drought caused famine, not was responsible for famine.

restaurateur

One who runs a restaurant.

result in

Use a stronger, more direct verb, such as cause.

Reuters name

Reuters is used as the name of our news organisation and as an adjective, e.g. a Reuters correspondent.

If we need to describe the parent company in copy we should write Thomson Reuters, the global information company.

We should refer to Reuters in exclusive interviews ("told Reuters") and in stories about the news organisation, e.g. one mentioning the activities of AP, AFP and Reuters in covering a war.

Our style permits use of an apostrophe only in connection with the name of the news organisation's founder, e.g. Reuter's birthplace in Kassel ... So write round the problem, e.g. The decision by Thomson Reuters to ... rather than Thomson Reuters decision to ...

Editorial policy is to use Thomson Reuters for all references to the company in the text of stories.

reveal

Use with caution. Use of the word implies (a) acceptance that the statement is true and (b) that the information had previously been kept secret, which may not be the case.

revenue

Not revenues.

Reverend

Capitalise religious titles when they immediately precede a personal name, otherwise use lower case, e.g. Bishop Thaddeus Smith, Dean Robert Jones, but the bishop, the dean. Use only the simplest and best-known titles at first reference, e.g. the Rev. Jesse Jackson, Dr John Smith rather than the Right Rev. John Smith.

revert back

Just revert will do.

rhinoceros, rhinoceroses

Richter scale

See earthquakes.

rifle, riffle

Rifle is a weapon, or to plunder or ransack. Riffle is to stir lightly and rapidly.

right wing

A right-winger, a right-wing politician, but the right wing of the political spectrum. Use with caution, as with all political labels.

rigmarole

road map

Two words.

rock’n’roll

rocks

Americans throw rocks, but in most other places use throw stones.

Rolls-Royce

Note hyphen.

Roma

The name of the people. Prefer to Gypsy, which is not used by the Roma themselves. Their language is Romany.

Roman Catholic Church

The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the Pope. Refer to a reigning Pope at first reference as e.g. Pope Benedict and at subsequent references as the pope or the pontiff. A reigning Pope does not take Roman numerals after his name unless to omit them would cause confusion. Past Church leaders should take Roman numerals after their name on first reference e.g. Pope Pius XII and may be referred to simply by their name e.g. Pius, on subsequent references unless to omit the numerals would cause confusion.

The Pope's appoints cardinals, his closest advisers. Those under 80 can enter a conclave to elect a new Pope. At first reference Cardinal John Doe. At subsequent references the cardinal or Doe. A high-ranking member of the Church, such as a cardinal, an archbishop or a bishop, can be referred to subsequently as a prelate. Monsignor is someone who has a rank between priest and bishop, e.g. Monsignor Martin Smith. In some countries, such as Italy, France and Spain and in Latin America, monsignor is a catchall title used for monsignors, bishops, archbishops and cardinals, e.g. the Archbishop of Bogota, Monsignor Enrique Perez. Avoid this usage. Use Boston Archbishop Charles Dust. For priests, use Father John Doe. Do not use the Rev., Reverend or Most Reverend. The Church hierarchy is: priest, monsignor, bishop, archbishop, cardinal, Pope. The Church government working in the Vatican is known as the Curia. Avoid using it as it needs to be explained. The Vatican technically refers to the city-state in Rome and the Holy See to the Church's central administration, but the terms have become interchangeable in common use. The Holy See's ambassadors around the world are known as papal nuncios and its embassies as nunciatures. If the Holy See does not have formal diplomatic relations with a country the Pope's envoy to the church in that country is an apostolic delegate.

Romania

Roman Numerals

Roman Numeral to Decimal Conversion Table

I	1	XXI	21	XLI	41	LXI	61	LXXXI	81
II	2	XXII	22	XLII	42	LXII	62	LXXXII	82
III	3	XXIII	23	XLIII	43	LXIII	63	LXXXIII	83
IV	4	XXIV	24	XLIV	44	LXIV	64	LXXXIV	84
V	5	XXV	25	XLV	45	LXV	65	LXXXV	85
VI	6	XXVI	26	XLVI	46	LXVI	66	LXXXVI	86
VII	7	XXVII	27	XLVII	47	LXVII	67	LXXXVII	87
VIII	8	XXVIII	28	XLVIII	48	LXVIII	68	LXXXVIII	88
IX	9	XXIX	29	XLIX	49	LXIX	69	LXXXIX	89
X	10	XXX	30	L	50	LXX	70	XC	90
XI	11	XXXI	31	LI	51	LXXI	71	XCI	91
XII	12	XXXII	32	LII	52	LXXII	72	XCII	92
XIII	13	XXXIII	33	LIII	53	LXXIII	73	XCIII	93
XIV	14	XXXIV	34	LIV	54	LXXIV	74	XCIV	94

XV	15	XXXV	35	LV	55	LXXV	75	XCV	95
XVI	16	XXXVI	36	LVI	56	LXXVI	76	XCVI	96
XVII	17	XXXVII	37	LVII	57	LXXVII	77	XCVII	97
XVIII	18	XXXVIII	38	LVIII	58	LXXVIII	78	XCVIII	98
XIX	19	XXXIX	39	LIX	59	LXXIX	79	XCIX	99
XX	20	XL	40	LX	60	LXXX	80	C	100
								D	500
								M	1000

roofs

roro

roll on/roll off vehicle ferry.

Rosh Hashanah

The Jewish New Year festival.

round up, roundup

Two words for the verb and one word for the noun.

round robin

Not a newsletter or circular, but a petition where the signatures are in a circle so no individual can be identified as the instigator.

rounding figures

Round off unwieldy figures, e.g. Japan produced 1.45 million cars in the six months ended ... not Japan produced 1,453,123 cars ... As a rule round off millions to the nearest 10,000, thousands to the nearest 100, hundreds to the nearest 10. Figures are normally rounded to two significant decimals, with halves rounded upwards. Thus 15.564 becomes 15.56, while 15.565 becomes 15.57. Do not round interest rates. Give them to the full number of decimal places supplied by the source of the information. Round foreign exchange quotations to four decimal places, e.g. the dollar rose to 0.9784 euros. If a country adjusts its currency, any rate given must not be rounded off, e.g. Manchukistan announced a rate of 5.79831 manchuks to the dollar. Do not round company dividends, e.g. the company announced a dividend of 0.123456 pence per share. Where totals do not add up because of rounding, this should be explained.

row

Do not use for argument or dispute.

royalty

Retain the titles of rulers and their consorts at second reference, e.g. King Hussein, Queen Beatrix, the queen. The titles of other members of royal families can be dropped at second reference. In Britain, for instance, Queen Elizabeth's husband is the Duke of Edinburgh, and at second reference the duke or Prince Philip. Her eldest son is Prince Charles, Prince of Wales. Either title can be used at first reference; then Charles or the prince. Use Roman numerals in referring to royalty, e.g. Charles I, Louis XIV not Charles 1st or Charles the First.

rubber stamp, rubber-stamp

Two words as a noun, hyphenated as a verb or adjective

rule

A word with negative overtones in a political context. Use govern as a verb.

run for office

Use for candidates in a presidential election For those in a parliamentary one, say stand.

rundown, run down

Rundown is the noun (but prefer review or summary). The verb is run down and the adjective is run-down.

runner-up, runners-up

rush hour, rush-hour

Two words for the noun, hyphenated for the adjective.

rushed to hospital

A clichÃ©. Use taken to hospital or treated in hospital.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 02:26, 27 August 2009.

S

Contents

- 1 saccharin, saccharine
- 2 Sahara
- 3 Sahel
- 4 Sahrawi
- 5 Saigon
- 6 Saint
- 7 Sahrawi
- 8 Saakashvili
- 9 salable, salably
- 10 salutary
- 11 Salvadorean, not Salvadoran.
- 12 salvo, salvos
- 13 Samoa
- 14 sanction
- 15 SARS
- 16 sat
- 17 savings and loans associations (U.S.)
- 18 saviour, savior in American style
- 19 Scandinavia
- 20 sceptic, but in American style skeptic
- 21 scheme
- 22 Scottish names
- 23 screen saver
- 24 SDRs
- 25 SEALS
- 26 seasons
- 27 Seattle
- 28 second guess
- 29 second-hand
- 30 second lieutenant
- 31 Second World War
- 32 Secret Service
- 33 secretary-general
- 34 sector
- 35 Security Council
- 36 see, saw
- 37 seize
- 38 selloff
- 39 semi
- 40 semiannual
- 41 semi-final
- 42 Senate
- 43 sentence length
- 44 separate
- 45 Sephardim
- 46 Sept. 11

- 47 septuagenarian
- 48 Serie A
- 49 serried
- 50 set point
- 51 Sevastopol
- 52 serviceable
- 53 sewage, sewerage
- 54 sexist language
- 55 shake-up, shake up
- 56 shall, will
- 57 sharia
- 58 sheikh
- 59 sheriff (U.S.)
- 60 sherpas
- 61 Shia
- 62 Shimla, not Simla, India
- 63 ship tonnage
- 64 ships' names
- 65 shoeshine, shoestring
- 66 shoo-in, not shoe-in.
- 67 short ton
- 68 short-covering
- 69 short-lived, short-sighted
- 70 shutdown
- 71 side effect
- 72 side by side
- 73 siege
- 74 Sierra Nevada
- 75 silicon, silicone
- 76 Simla
- 77 since
- 78 single out
- 79 Sinhalese
- 80 Sinn Fein
- 81 siphon
- 82 sister-in-law, sisters-in-law
- 83 situation
- 84 sizable
- 85 ski, skiing, skied, skier
- 86 skilful
- 87 skills
- 88 skipper
- 89 slam
- 90 slang
- 91 slew
- 92 slump
- 93 Smithsonian Institution, not Institute.
- 94 smoulder, but smolder in American style.
- 95 sneaked, not snuck
- 96 so as to

- 97 so-called
- 98 Social Security
- 99 socialist
- 100 software
- 101 Somali
- 102 some
- 103 song titles
- 104 sophisticated
- 105 sorcerer
- 106 SOS
- 107 South Asia
- 108 space age
- 109 space centre, but American style is space center
- 110 spaceship
- 111 space shuttle
- 112 spacewalk
- 113 Spanish names
- 114 special
- 115 species
- 116 speeds
- 117 spelled, misspelled, not spelt
- 118 spelling
- 119 spill, spilling, spilled, not spilt.
- 120 spin off, spinoff
- 121 spokesman, spokeswoman
- 122 spoonful, spoonfuls, not spoonsful or spoons full.
- 123 sports events titles
- 124 sports metaphors
- 125 sprang, sprung
- 126 square leg, square-leg
- 127 stadiums, not stadia.
- 128 stagehand, one word
- 129 stanch, staunch
- 130 Star Wars
- 131 startup
- 132 star/superstar
- 133 state names
- 134 station wagon, two words
- 135 stationary, stationery
- 136 statute mile
- 137 stepping stone, two words
- 138 stretcher
- 139 stealth
- 140 storey, storeys
- 141 storms
- 142 strait, straight
- 143 straitjacket
- 144 strait-laced
- 145 strategic
- 146 stratum, strata

- 147 stricture
- 148 strike
- 149 strong-arm
- 150 stupefy, stupefying, stupefaction
- 151 stupor
- 152 sub
- 153 submachinegun
- 154 subpoena, subpoenaing, subpoenaed
- 155 subprime
- 156 subsequent to, subsequently
- 157 substitute for
- 158 successive
- 159 successor
- 160 successfully
- 161 such as, like
- 162 Sudan, not the Sudan.
- 163 sufficient
- 164 sue, suing, sued
- 165 suit, suite
- 166 summit
- 167 summon, summons
- 168 Sunni/Shi'ite
- 169 super
- 170 superlatives
- 171 supersede
- 172 supervisor
- 173 supremo
- 174 Surinam, not Suriname
- 175 surrounded
- 176 SUV
- 177 Swastika
- 178 swath, swathe
- 179 swat, swot
- 180 syllabus, syllabuses
- 181 sync
- 182 synthesise, synthesizer, but in American style synthesize, synthesizer
- 183 Szczecin, not Stettin, Poland.

saccharin, saccharine

The noun is saccharin, the adjective is saccharine.

Sahara

Not Sahara Desert – sahara means desert in Arabic.

Sahel

A belt of countries across Africa south of the Sahara, comprising Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Chad, Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Sudan.

Sahrawi

The people of the Western Saharan republic proclaimed by Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence from Morocco. Its full name is the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Saigon

Now Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Saint

Use St. with full point.

Sahrawi

The people of the Western Saharan republic proclaimed by Polisario guerrillas fighting for independence from Morocco. Its full name is the Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic.

Saakashvili

Mikheil, not Mikhail, is the correct Georgian form of the president's first name.

salable, salably

salutary

Not salutory, for promoting health or safety, or wholesome. But salutatory, the adjective for a greeting.

Salvadorean, not Salvadoran.

salvo, salvos

Samoa

The islands making up the former Western Samoa are now officially known as the Independent State of Samoa. Use "Samoa" for short . The neighbouring U.S. territory is American Samoa.

sanction

Avoid sanction as a verb. It has conflicting meanings, to approve and to punish.

SARS

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome. A flu-like and potentially fatal viral disease. Use SARS at first reference and spell out the full name lower in the story.

sat

Sat, or was seated, or was sitting, but not was sat.

savings and loans associations (U.S.)

Not banks. Use associations on second reference.

saviour, savior in American style

Scandinavia

This comprises Denmark, Norway and Sweden. The Nordic countries are these three plus Finland and Iceland. Because of the danger of confusion, list the countries even if you use Nordic or Scandinavian in a lead for the sake of brevity.

sceptic, but in American style skeptic

scheme

Use the noun with caution and prefer “plan” or “initiative”. The noun has a neutral meaning in British English but can be pejorative in American English.

Scottish names

Be particularly careful with names beginning Mac. They could be e.g. MacLaren, Maclaren, McClaren. check and check again.

screen saver

Two words.

SDRs

Special drawing rights are international reserve assets created by the IMF and member countries to supplement existing reserves. Based on a basket of the major traded currencies and are the IMF unit of account for international transactions. The reference currency basket has specific weightings of major traded currencies. The latest value is on www.imf.org.

SEALS

A special operations force of the U.S. Navy. The acronym is for sea, air, land.

seasons

Be careful in writing of summer and winter, spring and autumn (fall), since the seasons are reversed north and south of the equator. Seasons are not capitalised unless part of the formal name of an event. Be specific about when something happened rather than use the season. e.g. The transport strike last August ... rather than ... The transport strike last summer.

Seattle

Stands alone in datelines.

second guess

Noun. Hyphenate as a verb

second-hand

With hyphen.

second lieutenant

Two words.

Second World War

Use World War Two, not WWII.

Secret Service

In the United States, a federal agency administered by the Department of Homeland Security. The Secret Service Uniformed Division protects the president's residence and offices and embassies in Washington.

secretary-general

Hyphenated. Capitalise if part of a formal title.

sector

Industry is better.

Security Council

The 15-member United Nations Security Council in New York is the body that takes many of the decisions on U.N. action around the world, often through numbered resolutions, e.g. Resolution 649. It consists of five permanent members with the power of veto over any resolution – Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. There are also 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council, made up of other U.N. countries which serve in rotation, representing different areas of the world. The Security Council presidency rotates monthly, by English alphabetical listing of its member states.

The U.N. Security Council becomes the council (lower case) at second reference.

see, saw

Inanimate objects do not have the power of sight. Do not write The game saw several violent incidents; the club’s progress has seen them climb to seventh in the table. The device is less absurd but similarly lazy when overused to apply to people, Bill McGreer saw his shot go wide.

seize

selloff

One word.

semi

In general, no hyphen.

semiannual

Prefer twice-yearly or twice a year.

semi-final

Hyphenated.

Senate

Capitalised.

sentence length

Sentences should generally be short but, to avoid a staccato effect, vary their length. Avoid complex constructions. A sentence with more than one subordinate clauses can be hard to follow and difficult to translate.

separate

Sephardim

Jews of Spanish or Portuguese descent as opposed to Ashkenazim who are Jews of East or Central European descent. Adjectives Sephardic, Ashkenazic.

Sept. 11

The date can stand alone without reference to the Twin Towers or the year 2001, as can the alternative reference 9/11.

septuagenarian

Serie A

Italian first division soccer. Capitalised.

serried

Close-pressed, packed, not just organised or in neat rows.

set point

Two words in tennis scoring.

Sevastopol

Not Sebastepol, Crimea.

serviceable

sewage, sewerage

Sewage is waste and sewerage is the system that removes it.

sexist language

Do not use language that perpetuates the stereotype of women. Such language is offensive, out of date and often simply inaccurate. Sexist references should be avoided, as should such linguistic absurdities as creating the crime of peopleslaughter. Do not refer to gender, a woman's looks, hairstyle or clothing unless they are details relevant to the story and similar expresssions would be used for men.

shake-up, shake up

The noun is a shake-up, the verb is to shake up.

shall, will

Strictly shall and should are reserved for the pronouns I and we, while will and would are used with you, he, she and they. If the action is performed with decided intention then shall and should can be used with you, he, she and they. They shall go to the ball no matter what their mothers say. The distinction between shall and will varies from country to country and can probably be ignored.

sharia

Islamic religious law (note lower case s). Sharia law is tautologous. Write sharia, Islamic law.

sheikh

Not sheik or shaikh. A courtesy title in Saudi Arabia but avoid in this context. The real sheikhs there are religious figures and sheikh should be used at first reference. Elsewhere in the Gulf it applies to members of ruling families as well as religious figures and should be used at first reference.

sheriff (U.S.)

Capitalise as a title before a name.

sherpas

Senior officials from G7/G8 countries who meet three or four times before each summit to agree topics to be discussed and to draft the final communiquÃ©. Named after the Himalayan people renowned for their mountaineering ability who are often employed as guides on expeditions. Best avoided as jargon or explained if you need to use it.

Shia

Use Shi’ite unless in a direct quote.

Shimla, not Simla, India

ship tonnage

See tonnage.

ships' names

Do not use HMS or USS to designate British or American warships if the nationality of the ship is already clear. Write the British frigate Battleaxe not the British frigate HMS Battleaxe. But in datelines write, for instance, ABOARD HMS BATTLEAXE. Routinely check the names of ships in Jane's Fighting Ships, Lloyd's Register or the weekly Lloyd's Shipping Index. Do not put quotation marks round the names of ships. Always use neuter pronouns.

shoeshine, shoestring

shoo-in, not shoe-in.

short ton

See ton, tonne.

short-covering

Hyphenated.

short-lived, short-sighted

Hyphenated.

shutdown

One word.

side effect

Two words, no hyphen.

side by side

As an adverb, no hyphens e.g. they walked side by side.. Hyphenate as an adjective, e.g. The stories received side-by-side display.

siege

Sierra Nevada

Not Sierra Nevada mountains (tautologous).

silicon, silicone

Silicon chips but silicone implants.

Simla

Use Shimla, India.

since

Do not use to mean because.

single out

By definition, this phrase should be used only for single examples. Do not write, for instance, He singled out Britain, France and Italy for blame.

Sinhalese

A major ethnic group in Sri Lanka.

Sinn Fein

Do not use Sinn Fein/IRA.

siphon

Not syphon.

sister-in-law, sisters-in-law

situation

The word can usually be dispensed with, as in a crisis situation, a debt situation, a flood situation.

sizable

ski, skiing, skied, skier

skilful

skills

Jargon. Avoid if possible.

skipper

Use only of fishing vessels. Otherwise captain.

slam

Slang. Prefer said.

slang

Avoid slang not be readily understood outside the English speaking world or your own country. It creates problems for translators. If a vivid quote contains slang, explain it in brackets or give a paraphrased version, e.g. He’s in the cat-bird seat (in a favoured position) “ or Saying Smith was in a favoured position, he added: He’s in the cat-bird seat.”

slew

It is colloquial and a clichÃ©. If you are trying to say a large number or amount then express it more precisely.

slump

A sudden or serious fall in economic activity or prices.

Smithsonian Institution, not Institute.

smoulder, but smolder in American style.

sneaked, not snuck

so as to

Use to.

so-called

Adjective and adverb.

Social Security

Capitalise when referring to the U.S. system.

socialist

Capitalise only when part of a proper name.

software

Capitalise, without quotation marks, e.g. Windows, Internet Explorer. Use quotation marks for computer games, e.g. “Bust a Move: Dance Summit”.

Somali

Not Somalian.

some

Write about 500 people rather than some 500 people. As an indication that a figure is an approximation, some is more likely to confuse translators than about.

song titles

Capitalise every word in the title apart from conjunctions, articles, particles and short prepositions, e.g. "All You Need Is Love", "Son of a Preacher Man".

sophisticated

A modish word when applied to weapons. Most weapon systems are sophisticated. If you just mean modern, say so.

sorcerer

SOS

An appeal for rescue. No spaces, no points.

South Asia

Use this for the region that includes Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

space age

Began with the launch of Sputnik 1 on Oct. 4, 1957.

space centre, but American style is space center

Use in stories to describe Cape Canaveral and other spacecraft launch facilities. Do not use spaceport

spaceship

space shuttle

Lower case unless part of a proper name.

spacewalk

One word

Spanish names

See Hispanic names.

special

Avoid. It rarely adds value. Instead tell us directly what is special about the person or the event.

species

Same word for singular and plural.

speeds

Use numerals for speeds 7 mph, 7 to 9 knots.

spelled, misspelled, not spelt

spelling

There are two generally accepted spelling systems for the English language. Our global client base is accustomed to reading both. Copy orginating in the Americas should follow North American spelling conventions, such as *color, defense, aging, caliber,* etc. Copy orginating elsewhere should follow British spelling norms. At all times stick to official spellings for American names and titles, such as U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates and U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Watch out for regional words that non-English language services and clients will find difficult to understand and translate. In American sports coverage, use American terms and spellings e.g. *center, maneuver, defense, offense, ballclub, postseason, preseason, lineman, line up, halfback, doubleheader.*

spill, spilling, spilled, not spilt.

spin off, spinoff

Spin off is the verb, spinoff the noun.

spokesman, spokeswoman

not spokesperson. If the sex of the person is not known then use representative.

spoonful, spoonfuls, not spoonsful or spoons full.

sports events titles

Use lower case for sport names, junior, men's, women's, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for an event title e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament. Use singular championship when one title is at stake and plural championships for more than one, U.S. Open tennis championships (men's, women's, doubles). Use the name of the sport before championship, tournament etc.

sports metaphors

Think twice before using a metaphor drawn from sport. They are often particular to a single sport or culture and are difficult to translate. Not everyone knows what you mean by bowling a googly, a full court press or standing up to the plate.

sprang, sprung

Sprang is the past tense. The crew sprang to attention. Sprung is the past participle. Spring has sprung.

square leg, square-leg

Two words for the fielding position in cricket, at square leg, but hyphenated as an adjective, square-leg umpire.

stadiums, not stadia.

stagehand, one word

stanch, staunch

Use stanch for the verb, staunch for the adjective. The staunch supporter stanched the flow of blood.

Star Wars

Use quote marks when it means the U.S. Strategic Defence Initiatve.

startup

One word for a new business.

star/superstar

Avoid. Do not use in sports reporting.

state names

Abbreviate the names of states in the United States only in datelines. In text, spell out the names in full.

station wagon, two words

stationary, stationery

Stationary is fixed or still. Stationery is writing material.

statute mile

About 1.6 km.

stepping stone, two words

stretcher

Do not use as a verb. Bill Bloggs was carried off, not stretchered off.

stealth

Do not capitalize when describing aircraft or weapons. See military.

storey, storeys

The third storey of a building. But tell me a different story. In American style, story for both uses.

storms

A storm is more severe than a gale. The most severe of all storms is a cyclone, in which winds blow spirally inwards towards a centre of low barometric pressure. The word cyclone is used of such storms in the Indian Ocean and Australia. In the China Seas and West Pacific such a storm is a typhoon and in the Caribbean and on the east coast of the United States a hurricane. A tornado is a violent whirling windstorm with a very narrow focus, common in the United States. In many countries meteorological offices give tropical storms the names of men and women in alphabetical sequence. Japan numbers them sequentially, beginning afresh on January 1 each year. To be recognised as typhoon, a tropical storm has to have winds of 17 metres (56 feet) per second or stronger. The Beaufort scale measures wind speed.

strait, straight

a strait is a narrow channel joining two larger bodies of water; in dire straits or in desperate straits is a clichÃ© for someone in distress. The home straight is the final part of a racecourse between the last bend and the finishing post.

straitjacket

strait-laced

Narrow in principles, or prudish. Not straight-laced.

strategic

The distinction between strategy – the conduct of a military campaign – and tactics – manoeuvring in the presence of the enemy – is worth preserving. Do not abuse strategic by making it mean simply important. A mountain pass, a bridge or even a building is of strategic importance if its possession could affect the conduct of a campaign as a whole. If it is only of local importance its value is tactical.

stratum, strata

One stratum, several strata.

stricture

Adverse criticism, or a binding or closure. The first meaning is the one most commonly used.

strike

Do not use as a transitive verb. For strike action say strike.

strong-arm

Hyphenated as verb and adjective.

stupefy, stupefying, stupefaction

stupor

sub

In general, no hyphen as a prefix.

submachinegun

One word. See also Military

subpoena, subpoenaing, subpoenaed

subprime

One word.

subsequent to, subsequently

Use after or later.

substitute for

The verb substitute takes the preposition for. Do not confuse with replace with or replace by.

successive

Preferable to straight.

successor

successfully

Can often be excised, as in They successfully sailed round the world.

such as, like

Such is used when offering an example. Like means similar to. Politicians like Brown have short tempers and long memories, but Players such as Smith, Patel and Jones are essential in the team.

Sudan, not the Sudan.

sufficient

Generally prefer enough.

sue, suing, sued

Not sueing.

suit, suite

A suit of clothes or to follow suit in cards. However, a suite of followers, rooms or furniture or play a suite of tunes.

summit

Use this term only for meetings of heads of state or government. You cannot have a summit of foreign ministers or of trade union leaders. Do not use mini-summit. Two leaders can make a summit.

summon, summons

The verb is to summon. The noun is a summons.

Sunni/Shi’ite

Muslims are split into two main groups, Sunni and Shi'ite. Sunnis are estimated about 80 percent of all Muslims and include most Arabs. Sunnis and Shi'ites draw spiritual inspiration from the same source, the Prophet Mohammad, but Shi'ite theologians have much greater freedom of interpretation. As well as adhering to the revelations of the Muslim holy book, the Koran, Sunnis follow the Prophet Mohammad's rule of life (the Sunna) and traditions based on his sayings. Shi'ites hold that the succession to the Prophet should remain in his own family. Since the direct line was broken not long after the death of Mohammad, Shi'ites believe there is a Hidden Imam (spiritual leader) who will reappear one day. In Iran, where Shi'ites are predominant, the revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini was considered the Imam's deputy on earth. His successor as Supreme Leader holds the same authority Rivalry between Sunnis and Shi'ites extends back to the years following the death of the Prophet Mohammad, when Islam first split over the question of who was the rightful successor. Some hardline Sunnis regard Shi'ites as heretics and Shi'ite minority communities in some parts of the Middle East complain of discrimination

super

In general, no hyphen as a prefix.

superlatives

Be careful with first, largest, biggest, highest and oldest because such descriptions are often challenged. Have a source for them. but be particularly sceptical about news releases claiming records, especially auction records.Avoid similar value judgments. Do not call a company giant, because many companies are giants in one way or another. When does a company become a giant?

supersede

supervisor

supremo

Do not use the term for a supreme commander, which is not widely understood outside Britain.

Surinam, not Suriname

Former Dutch colony in South America.

surrounded

Completely surrounded is tautologous, as is surrounded on all sides. it is impossible to be surrounded on two or three sides.

SUV

Sport (singular) Utility Vehicle.

Swastika

swath, swathe

A swath is a strip cut by a scythe or mowing machine. Swathe is to wrap, or a binding or bandage. Cut a swath, but swathe someone in love.

swat, swot

Swat a wasp but swot for your exams.

syllabus, syllabuses

sync

Prefer to 'synch' as a way to shorten synchronisation, as in out of sync.

synthesise, synthesizer, but in American style synthesize, synthesizer

Szczecin, not Stettin, Poland.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 11:25, 19 October 2009.

T

Contents

- 1 table
- 2 tablespoon, tablespoonfuls
- 3 take over (verb), takeover (noun)
- 4 Talib/Taliban
- 5 Tangier, not Tangiers, Morocco.
- 6 tankan
- 7 targeted
- 8 Tatar
- 9 tattoos, tattoing, tattoed
- 10 tautology
- 11 tax avoidance/evasion
- 12 Tbilisi, not Tiflis, Georgia.
- 13 teammate
- 14 teams
- 15 teaspoon, teaspoonful, teaspoonfuls
- 16 teenage, teenager
- 17 terminate
- 18 teargas
- 19 Tehran, not Teheran, Iran.
- 20 Tel Aviv
- 21 television station/network
- 22 television series/season
- 23 temblor
- 24 temperatures
- 25 Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif
- 26 temporary respite
- 27 tenses
- 28 terrorism
- 29 Thai names
- 30 that, which
- 31 theatre, but in American style theater
- 32 their, there, they're
- 33 there is, there are
- 34 Thimphu
- 35 Third World
- 36 therefore
- 37 third man
- 38 thrash, thresh
- 39 threshold
- 40 Tiananmen Square, not Tienanmen, in Beijing
- 41 tiebreak
- 42 Tigray
- 43 Timbuktu
- 44 time
- 45 titbit, but in American style tidbit
- 46 titles

- 47 titles of sports events
- 48 titleholder
- 49 together
- 50 told reporters
- 51 told Reuters
- 52 tomato, tomatoes
- 53 ton, tonne
- 54 tonnage of ships
- 55 top
- 56 topspin
- 57 tornado, tornadoes
- 58 torpedo
- 59 tortuous, torturous
- 60 Tory, Tories
- 61 total, totalling, totalled, but in American style total, totaling, totaled
- 62 total annihilation
- 63 Touareg
- 64 towards
- 65 trademark
- 66 trade union, trade unions, not trades unions.
- 67 traffic
- 68 tragedy
- 69 Transdniestria
- 70 trans-
- 71 transfer, transferring, transferred
- 72 transparency
- 73 transpired
- 74 transportation
- 75 transsexual
- 76 transvestite
- 77 travel, travelled, travelling, traveller
- 78 travelogue
- 79 treasury bill
- 80 trillion
- 81 triplets
- 82 Trojan horse, Trojan Wars
- 83 troop, troupe
- 84 troubled
- 85 truck
- 86 true facts
- 87 try and
- 88 Tsar, not Czar
- 89 T-shirt, not teeshirt
- 90 tsunami
- 91 tuberculosis
- 92 TUC
- 93 turgid, turbid
- 94 Tuvalu
- 95 TV

- 96 twice
- 97 typhoon
- 98 tyre
- 99 Tyrol, Austria

table

Do not use as a verb. It has conflicting meanings -- to put a bill forward for discussion and to postpone discussion of it.

tablespoon, tablespoonfuls

take over (verb), takeover (noun)

Talib/Taliban

Radical Sunni Muslim movement that ruled most of Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001. From the Arabic for “student” (Talib). The plural is Taliban.

Tangier, not Tangiers, Morocco.

tankan

A Bank of Japan report on sentiment among Japanese companies, based on a quarterly survey covering some 10,000 companies.

targeted

Not targetted. Except in a military context, prefer aimed at or directed at, or describe exactly what is being done to whom.

Tatar

Soviet ethnic group. Not Tartar.

tattoos, tattoing, tattoed

tautology

Saying the same thing twice, as in 'a new record' where the word new is unnecessary. Others are 'originally built', 'future risks', 'weather conditions', 'in a westerly direction'.

tax avoidance/evasion

Tax avoidance is legal, tax evasion is illegal. Be specific.

Tbilisi, not Tiflis, Georgia.

teammate

One word.

teams

Teams and clubs are used as plural nouns, except in American sport. Fulham buy new Dutch striker. Manchester United said they would not rush into the transfer market.

teaspoon, teaspoonful, teaspoonfuls

teenage, teenager

terminate

Use stop or end.

teargas

one word.

Tehran, not Teheran, Iran.

Tel Aviv

Tel Aviv is not the capital of Israel and the status of Jerusalem is contentious. Do not use the name of either city as a synonym for Israel, as in the Jerusalem government, or refer to Jerusalem as the

capital of Israel.

television station/network

A televison station is a single, local broadcasting entity whereas a network is a group of affiliated stations that transmit the same programmes during certain hours and whose programmes appears on a single channel in each market.

television series/season

The season of a show is different from a series, e.g. The television series "Friends" is in its third season.

temblor

An American word for earthquake, not trembler.

temperatures

Express in Celsius (the same scale as Centigrade) and Fahrenheit, using the scale of the country involved first, with conversion in brackets. Spell in full at first reference, abbreviating to C and F subsequently, 25 Celsius, 40C. Freezing point in Celsius is 0 degrees, in Fahrenheit 32 degrees. Convert from Celsius to Fahrenheit for temperatures above zero by multiplying by 9, dividing by 5 and adding 32, e.g. 20 Celsius (68 Fahrenheit). For temperatures below zero multiply by nine, divide by five and subtract from 32, e.g. minus 15C (5F), minus 20C (minus 4F). Convert from Fahrenheit to Celsius for temperatures above 32 by subtracting 32, multiplying by five and dividing by nine. For temperatures below freezing take the total number of degrees by which the temperature is below 32, multiply by five and divide by nine, e.g. minus 8F is 40 below freezing, 40 x 5/9 gives you 22, therefore minus 22C.

Temple Mount/al-Haram al-Sharif

A 14-hectare (34-acre) area of the Old City of Jerusalem sacred to Jews and Muslims. It is the site of the biblical Jewish temple destroyed in AD 70. Many Jews believe the Western Wall below the Mount, Judaism’s holiest place, is a remnant of the retaining wall of the ancient temple site. Muslims believe the Prophet Mohammad ascended into heaven from this place. They built the al-Aqsa mosque and the gilded Dome of the Rock on the site and called it al-Haram al-Sharif (the Noble Sanctuary). It is the third holiest Islamic shrine after Mecca and Medina.

temporary respite

Tautological. A respite is by definition temporary.

tenses

See writing.

terrorism

We may refer without attribution to terrorism and counter-terrorism in general but do not refer to specific events as terrorism. Nor do we use the word terrorist without attribution to qualify specific individuals, groups or events. Terrorism and terrorist must be retained when quoting someone in direct speech. When quoting someone in indirect speech, care must be taken with sentence structure to ensure it is entirely clear that they are the source's words and not a label. Terrorism and terrorist should not be used as single words in inverted commas (e.g. "terrorist") or preceded by so-called (e.g. a so-called terrorist attack) since that can be taken to imply a value judgment. Use a fuller quote if necessary. Terror as in terror attack or terror cell should be avoided, except in direct quotes.

Report the subjects of news stories objectively, their actions, identity and background. Aim for a dispassionate use of language so that individuals, organisations and governments can make their own judgment on the basis of facts. Seek to use more specific terms like “bomber” or “bombing”, “hijacker” or “hijacking”, “attacker” or “attacks”, “gunman” or “gunmen” etc.

Thai names

The first name is used alone at second reference, e.g. Prime Minister Chatichai Choonhavan said ... Chatichai added ...

that, which

Use that in defining clauses, e.g. the cup that cheers. Reserve which for informative clauses, e.g. the cup, which was blue, was full of water. Avoid the unnecessary use of that as in He said that he was going to …

theatre, but in American style theater

Unless it is part of a proper name.

their, there, they're

Know the difference.

there is, there are

Usuallly unnecessary, e.g. There are two choices facing the captain can be changed to The captain faces two choices.

Thimphu

Not Thimpu, Bhutan.

Third World

A term to be avoided. Use developing countries or poor countries instead.

therefore

Use so.

third man

Two words for fielding position in cricket.

thrash, thresh

Thrash means to beat soundly, thresh to beat out, e.g. grain, corn.

threshold

Not threshhold, but withhold not withold.

Tiananmen Square, not Tienanmen, in Beijing

tiebreak

One word in tennis.

Tigray

Not Tigre, Ethiopia. The adjective is Tigrayan.

Timbuktu

Not Timbuktou or Timbuctoo, Mali.

time

Abbreviations of time zones are acceptable providing the GMT equivalent is given.

BST (British Summer Time) = GMT +1 CET (Central European Time) = GMT +1 CDT (Central Daylight Time) = GMT -5 CST (Central Standard Time) = GMT -6 EST (Eastern Standard Time) = GMT -5 MDT (Mountain Daylight Time) = GMT -6 MST (Mountain Standard Time) = GMT -7 PST (Pacific Standard Time) = GMT -8

When referring to times first give the local time by the 12-hour clock (without using the words local time) and follow it with a bracketed conversion to a 24-hour clock time for a specified time zone, e.g. ... will meet at 10 a.m. (1600 GMT). Use figures except for noon and midnight. Use a colon to separate hours and minutes, 3:15 p.m.

Use the style on Friday, on Saturday, on Sunday rather than the looser today, yesterday, tomorrow. However, in American style, it is He came Friday, not on Friday.

Do not use phrases like several months ago or recently which suggest we do not know when something happened or are too lazy to find out. Be precise – last August, on Feb. 2.

titbit, but in American style tidbit

titles

Capitalise an official’s title when it immediately precedes the person’s name, but when the title follows the name or is used alone use lower case, e.g.: President Tom Smith but The president said: “I would like to welcome the British prime minister, Janet Courage.” See Military titles

titles of sports events

Use lower case for sport names, junior, men’s, women’s, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for the event title e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament. Use singular championship when one title is at stake and plural championships for more than one, U.S. Open tennis championships (men’s, women’s, doubles). Use the name of the sport before championship, tournament etc.

titleholder

together

The word can often be dropped, as in meet together, join together and together with.

told reporters

Use this only when the source is speaking informally to a group of reporters. If he or she is addressing a news conference, say so.

told Reuters

Use this phrase only when we are being given significant information or an interview on an exclusive basis. Otherwise it is told reporters or told a news conference. If we get information on the basis of a telephone call to an official spokesman/spokeswoman who would make the same information available to anyone who called, we need simply say the spokesman/ spokeswoman said.

tomato, tomatoes

ton, tonne

We use both tons and tonnes, without having to give a conversion, but you must make clear what kind of ton(ne) is meant, using the terms long and short where appropriate. The three measures are: **tonne** – 2,204.6 pounds (1,000 kg), formerly called metric ton

long ton – 2,240 pounds (or 20 hundredweights, 20 x 112 pounds).

short ton – 2,000 pounds, American ton

Use lb for pounds in copy

tonnage of ships

For passenger liners, cruise ships and other vessels, other than warships, tankers and dry bulk cargo ships, express in gross registered tonnage (grt), a volume measurement expressed in tons, and the first bold-type figure in Lloyd's Register of Shipping.For tankers and dry bulk cargo vessels the measurement is in deadweight tonnes (dwt,), the actual weight in tonnes of maximum cargo, stores, fuel and people carried, which can be at least twice the gross tonnage.

A tonnage scale called compensated gross tons (cgt) is used in statistics to show a country's shipbuilding capacity. Cgt factors in manpower and added values. For instance, a very large crude carrier is bigger and may need more steel than a smaller liquefied gas carrier, but the number of hours needed to complete the gas carrier, and its value in the market, may be higher than for the supertanker. In some cases other means of measuring the ship's capacity are used. For liquefied

gas carriers, use cubic metres (feet) more often than dwt to show the ship's capacity. For container ships use teu (twenty-foot equivalent unit) or feu (forty-foot equivalent unit).

top

Use sparingly because it is often tautological, e.g. The president met his top aides ... He would hardly consult junior aides.

topspin

One word in tennis.

tornado, tornadoes

however, note the plural of the fighter-bomber in service with some West European air forces is Tornados.

torpedo

torpedoes but torpedoing.

tortuous, torturous

Tortuous is full of windings or far from straightforward. Torturous is causing torture or violent distortion. Negotiations are often tortuous, rarely torturous.

Tory, Tories

Acceptable alternative for second reference to Conservative Party members in Britain.

total, totalling, totalled, but in American style total, totaling, totaled

A total of is usually redundant. Just give the figure.

total annihilation

Redundant. Annihilation is total.

Touareg

Use Tuareg.

towards

Not toward. But untoward. However, American style is toward.

trademark

A trademark is a brand, symbol or word registered by a manufacturer and protected by law to prevent others from using it. Use a generic equivalent unless the trademark is important to the story. When used, follow the owner's capitalisation, e.g. Aspro not aspro but aspirin.

trade union, trade unions, not trades unions.

traffic

trafficked, trafficker

tragedy

Do not devalue this word by overuse. Avoid in sports reporting.

Transdniestria

A region of Moldova. Do not use Dnestr or other variants unless in quotes.

trans-

When the second element of a word beginning with trans- starts with a capital, hyphenate, e.g. trans-Siberian. Exceptions are transatlantic, transfat, transpacific, transarctic, transalpine.

transfer, transferring, transferred

transparency

A vogue word. Openness will often serve as a substitute.

transpired

Use it in the sense of came to be known, not of happened.

transportation

Use transport except where part of a title, e.g. U..S. Department of Transportation.

transsexual

A person who identifies as, or wishes to live and be accepted as, a member of the opposite sex. Transsexuals usually desire physical alteration of their bodies to bring them closer to the sex with which they identify. See transvestite

transvestite

Regarded by many cross-dressers as pejorative and should be avoided. Use a simple description or explanation of how the person prefers to be described. eg "Award-winning potter Grayson Perry, who frequently dresses as a woman and calls himself Claire..." See transsexual.

travel, travelled, travelling, traveller

But in American style traveled, traveling, traveler.

travelogue

treasury bill

use lower case treasury bill, not Treasury bill

trillion

Trillion means one thousand billion. The word must be spelled out, although it can be abbreviated to trln when necessary in headlines. Always use numerals before trillion, e.g. 2 trillion, 4 trillion.

triplets

Be careful when linking triple ideas that you have a proper complement of verbs. The following sentence is wrong: Three Iraqis were killed, 22 captured and the crew of the minesweeper tried to scuttle their ship. It should read ... Three Iraqis were killed, 22 were captured and the crew of the

minesweeper tried... i.e. one complete verb for each element.

Trojan horse, Trojan Wars

troop, troupe

A troop is a body of soldiers or a group of people. Use troupe only for performers.

troubled

Be careful in using such a word to describe nouns, especially companies; it can be defamatory. Be specific, e.g. the company that lost $4 million in its last financial year.

truck

Not lorry.

true facts

Tautological. If a fact is not true it is not a fact.

try and

Use try to.

Tsar, not Czar

T-shirt, not teeshirt

tsunami

Japanese for a tidal wave.

tuberculosis

May be referred to as TB at second reference. The adjective is tuberculous not tubercular.

TUC

Trades Union Congress (UK). Note plural Trades.

turgid, turbid

Turgid is swollen, pompous or bombastic. Turbid is muddy or thick.

Tuvalu

Formerly Ellice Islands, West Pacific.

TV

Acceptable contraction for television.

twice

Not two time or two times. Bigger numbers should be in the plural, e.g. seven times champion.

typhoon

Capitalise when it has been given a name, e.g. Typhoon Mark.

tyre

But in American style tire (on a wheel).

Tyrol, Austria

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 13:05, 13 September 2011.

U

Contents

- 1 UAE
- 2 UAW
- 3 UEFA
- 4 UFO
- 5 UHF
- 6 UK
- 7 UKAEA
- 8 Ukraine
- 9 ULCC
- 10 Ulster
- 11 ultimatum, ultimatums
- 12 Uncle Tom
- 13 under way
- 14 undersecretary
- 15 unexceptionable, unexceptional
- 16 UNICEF
- 17 Unification Church
- 18 uninterested, disinterested
- 19 unique
- 20 un-Islamic
- 21 United Kingdom
- 22 United Nations
- 23 United States
- 24 unparalleled
- 25 unusual names
- 26 up/down
- 27 upside down
- 28 upsurge
- 29 upcoming
- 30 Uppsala, Sweden.
- 31 uranium
- 32 URL
- 33 USDA
- 34 U.S. Congress
- 35 U.S. courts
- 36 U.S. datelines
- 37 U.S. Marshals Service
- 38 U.S. legislative titles
- 39 U.S. states
- 40 user friendly
- 41 utilise
- 42 U-turn

UAE

United Arab Emirates.

UAW

United Auto Workers (U.S.).

UEFA

A singular noun, all in capitals. Explain as European soccer’s governing body. See www.uefa.com.

UFO

unidentified flying object.

UHF

ultra high frequency

UK

United Kingdom, no full stops

UKAEA

UK Atomic Energy Authority.

Ukraine

Not the Ukraine.

ULCC

ultra-large crude carrier.

Ulster

Do not use as a synonym for Northern Ireland, unless quoting someone. See Northern Ireland.

ultimatum, ultimatums

Uncle Tom

A term of contempt applied to a black person. Potentially libellous.

under way

Two words. Write began or started rather than got under way unless referring to ships.

undersecretary

One word.

unexceptionable, unexceptional

Unexceptionable will not cause problems because no one raises an objection. Unexceptional is ordinary or commonplace.

UNICEF

The acronym can be used for all references to the United Nations Children's Fund (formerly the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund).

Unification Church

Founded by Rev. Sun Myung Moon in South Korea in 1954, the Unification Church is a religious movement that has expanded around the world and is believed to have up to three million members. See religous terms

uninterested, disinterested

Uninterested means the opposite of interested. Disinterested means impartial.

unique

Cannot be qualified, so do not write almost unique, more unique, rather unique.

un-Islamic

not unIslamic

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom comprises Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Great Britain comprises England, Wales and Scotland. Use the full or abbreviated form (UK) only to emphasise the inclusion of Northern Ireland with England, Scotland and Wales or if hard-pressed for headline space.

United Nations

Spell it out at first reference when used as a noun. It may be abbreviated to U.N. in a headline. As an adjective it can be also be abbreviated at first reference, e.g. the U.N. General Assembly, U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. Security Council: The 15-member United Nations Security Council in New York is the body that takes many of the decisions on U.N. action around the world, often through numbered resolutions, e.g. Resolution 649. It consists of five permanent members with the power of veto over any resolution – Britain, China, France, Russia and the United States. There are also 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council, made up of other U.N. countries which serve in rotation, representing different areas of the world. The Security Council presidency rotates monthly, by English alphabetical listing of its member states.

Some of the main U.N. agencies:

- **UNEP**: U.N. Environment Programme.
- **UNESCO**: U.N. Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation.
- **UNHCR**: U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees. If you wish to avoid using this cumbersome title at first reference, use a form of words like a U.N. agency said or the main U.N refugee agency said, giving the full name lower in the story. Note that there is no U.N. High Commission for Refugees, the correct title of the institution being the Office of the UNHCR.
- **UNICEF**: The acronym can be used for all references to the United Nations Children’s Fund.
- **UNIDO**: U.N. Industrial Development Organisation.
- **UNRWA**: U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees.

United States

Spell it out at all references in text when used as a noun. It may be abbreviated to U.S. in a headline. As an adjective it can also be abbreviated at first reference, e.g. the U.S. State Department. Do not use USA except in quoted passages. Do not use the noun America as a synonym for the United States, although you may use American instead of U.S. as an adjective.

unparalleled

Not unparallelled.

unusual names

If a name is unusual repeat it in brackets, e.g. Aigail (repeat Aigail) Carter. Do not write Aigail (eds: correct).

up/down

In economic and financial reporting avoid saying is up or is down. Use higher, lower or increased, decreased, firmer, weaker, etc. Do not use up as a verb, as in ups dividend. Always report ... rose/fell to ... from, never vice versa.

upside down

The car turned upside down, but the book is upside-down.

upsurge

Use surge.

upcoming

Do not use

Uppsala, Sweden.

uranium

A radioactive metal. It is enriched by rapid spinning that separates uranium-235, the fuel for nuclear reactors, from uranium-238 that is used to make plutonium.

URL

Uniform Resource Locator. Any style for website addresses.

USDA

U.S. Department of Agriculture.

U.S. Congress

The U.S. Congress is divided into two bodies: the 100-member Senate, where each state has two members, and the House of Representatives, whose 435 members are allotted in proportion to a state's population. Almost all members of Congress are either Democrats or Republicans with a few independent s who align with one of the two parties.

U.S. courts

The U.S. court system is divided into state courts, which rule on state laws, and federal courts which rule on national laws and the U.S. Constitution. The federal court system consists of district courts, courts of appeal and, at the top, the U.S. Supreme Court whose nine members are appointed for life. The Supreme Court is the final arbiter on constitutional issues.

Grand juries: Their prime function is to review evidence presented by a prosecutor and determine whether there is probable cause to return an indictment. Under the constitution, a grand jury indictment is required for federal criminal charges. Only about half of the states' judicial systems use grand juries.

Note: the New York Supreme Court is a trial court, not the highest court in the state (the Court of Appeals), and this should be made clear in copy. It is roughly equivalent to the district courts, superior courts or circuit courts of other states.

U.S. datelines

The following U.S. cities stand alone in a dateline without the need to mention their state: Atlanta, Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Honolulu, Houston, Indianapolis, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Miami, Milwauke, Minneapolis, New Orleans, New York, Oklahoma City, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburg, St Louis, Salt Lake City, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle, Washington.

U.S. Marshals Service

No apostrophe.

U.S. legislative titles

Do not abbreviate legislative titles in the United States. Use Governor, Senator, Representative at first mention and then refer to the politician by surname on subsequent reference.

There is no need to include the district or state that the legislator represents, unless it is context essential to understanding the story, eg. a Senator from Michigan voting for aid for auto manufacturers.

Refrain from referring to either of a state's senators as "senior" or "junior", which is not widely understood outside the United States. There is no difference in legislative rights or powers and his or her political leanings are more relevant, e.g right-wing Republican or liberal Democrat.

U.S. states

Most are divided into **counties** with the exception of Louisiana which is composed of **parishes**. Strictly speaking, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Virginia are **commonwealths** , but we should refer to them as states. Their constitutional status is the same.

user friendly

Jargon. Prefer easy to use.

utilise

Prefer use.

U-turn

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 11:40, 31 March 2010.

V

Contents

- 1 Valletta, not Valetta, Malta.
- 2 Vanuatu
- 3 Varanasi
- 4 VAT
- 5 venal, venial
- 6 vendor
- 7 ventricle, not ventrical, of the heart
- 8 Very light
- 9 Versus
- 10 veteran
- 11 veto, vetoes, vetoeing, vetoed
- 12 VHF
- 13 via
- 14 vice-
- 15 vice versa
- 16 videogame
- 17 vie, vying, vied
- 18 Viet Cong, not Vietcong
- 19 Vietnam
- 20 Vietnamese names
- 21 Virgin Mary
- 22 vocal cords
- 23 voice mails
- 24 volcano, volcanoes
- 25 Volgograd
- 26 volley, volleys
- 27 Voodoo
- 28 VTOL
- 29 vulgarities

Valletta, not Valetta, Malta.

Vanuatu

Formerly New Hebrides, Southwest Pacific.

Varanasi

Not Benares, India.

VAT

Value added tax, a system of taxing products on the value added at each stage of production and exchange, effectively a consumption tax.

venal, venial

A venal person is corruptible, a venial sin is pardonable.

vendor

ventricle, not ventrical, of the heart

Very light

A signal flare fired from a pistol.

Versus

Spell it out in full in text. It can be abbreviated to vs in tables., but American style is to use v. in court cases, e.g. Roe v. Wade.

veteran

Overused in sports and general news stories and best avoided. Be more precise. Give the person’s age and the details that show why the person is a veteran.

veto, vetoes, vetoeing, vetoed

VHF

very high frequency.

via

Means by way of not by means of. We came via the main roads, but not We came via the bus.

vice-

Hyphenate titles such as vice-president, vice-admiral, vice-chairman etc, apart from U.S. titles. In American style, use two words for titles such as vice admiral, vice chairman, vice secretary. Hyphenate vice-president unless U.S. usage, e.g. vice president of the United States or of an American company. Capitalise when immediately preceding the name of a person.

vice versa

Not vica versa. No hyphen.

videogame

One word.

vie, vying, vied

Viet Cong, not Vietcong

Vietnam

Not Viet Nam.

Vietnamese names

Use the last name alone at second reference, e.g. Nguyen Co Thach is Thach and Bui Tin is Tin. The only exception to this rule is the late Ho Chi Minh (a nom de guerre). He is Ho at second reference.

Virgin Mary

Use this title or the Madonna, not Our Lady except in titles such as Our Lady of Czestochowa or in the names of churches.

vocal cords

Not chords.

voice mails

Two words.

volcano, volcanoes

Volgograd

Formerly Tsaritsyn and then Stalingrad.

volley, volleys

Voodoo

Capitalise when referring to the religion, lower case for a magical fix.

VTOL

vertical take-off and landing.

vulgarities

See obscenities.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 21:44, 20 August 2009.

W

Contents

- 1 wagon
- 2 Wahhabi, Wahhabism
- 3 waistline
- 4 waiver, waver
- 5 wake
- 6 walkie-talkie
- 7 war on terror
- 8 warn
- 9 wartime
- 10 Washington, Washington, D.C.
- 11 Washington's Birthday
- 12 wastebasket
- 13 weather
- 14 weather forecaster, not weatherman
- 15 weather terms
- 16 Web, website
- 17 weekend
- 18 week-long
- 19 well
- 20 West
- 21 West Bank
- 22 Western
- 23 Western Hemisphere
- 24 Western Sahara
- 25 Western Samoa
- 26 Western Wall
- 27 Wheeler-dealer
- 28 Whet, wet
- 29 which
- 30 whiskey, whisky
- 31 white-collar
- 32 White House
- 33 white paper
- 34 whiz-kid
- 35 WHO
- 36 who, whom
- 37 wicketkeeper
- 38 wicketkeeper-batsman
- 39 wide-, -wide
- 40 widow
- 41 Wi-Fi
- 42 wind farm
- 43 withhold
- 44 woes

- 45 word processor, word processing
- 46 workforce
- 47 World Bank
- 48 World Council of Churches
- 49 World War One/Two
- 50 World Wide Web
- 51 worldwide
- 52 worship, worshipper, worshipped
- 53 wrack, rack
- 54 wreaked
- 55 writedown
- 56 writing
    - 56.1 clichÃ©s
    - 56.2 euphemism
    - 56.3 jargon
    - 56.4 long words and clumsy titles
    - 56.5 Synonyms
    - 56.6 metaphors
    - 56.7 repetition
    - 56.8 reported speech
    - 56.9 spin
    - 56.10 verbs
- 57 writeoff
- 58 WTO
- 59 WWF

wagon

not waggon.

Wahhabi, Wahhabism

Referring to the official school of Islam in Saudi Arabia

waistline

waiver, waver

A waiver is an act of renunciation, to waver is to vacillate.

wake

Do not use in the wake of. Use after or following.

walkie-talkie

Note hyphen.

war on terror

Do not use this phrase unless in a quote. It is poor English and part of the propaganda battle around militant violence.

warn

It is acceptable to leave out the object of the verb warn, e.g. Police warned of possible attacks. The object of the verb, the public or travellers or just people, is implied. However, the verb is often stronger and clearer if you spell out exactly who is being warned.

wartime

One word.

Washington, Washington, D.C.

Do not specify D.C. unless there is a clear need to distinguish between the western U.S. state and the federal district that serves as the U.S. capital.

Washington's Birthday

Capitalise for the holiday which falls on the third Monday of February.

wastebasket

One word.

weather

Write good/poor/stormy weather not good/poor/stormy weather conditions.

weather forecaster, not weatherman

weather terms

- **anticyclone**: An area of pressure that has diverging winds and a rotation opposite to that of the earth. This is clockwise the northern hemisphere and anti-clockwise in the southern hemisphere. It is the opposite of an area of low pressure, or a cyclone.
- **atmospheric or barometric pressure**: The pressure exerted by the atmosphere at a given point expressed in millibars, or in inches or millimetres of mercury (Hg). Also known as barometric pressure.
- **Beaufort Scale**: A system of assessing wind speeds. It is based on the Beaufort Force or Number, which is composed of the wind speed, a descriptive term, and the visible effects upon land objects and/or sea surfaces.
- **blizzard**: A severe snowstorm with winds of more than 40km and hour, temperatures lower than minus 10 degrees Celsius and visibility of less than 500 metres.
- **Celsius temperature scale**: A temperature scale where water at sea level has a freezing point of 0Â° degrees and a boiling point of 100Â° degrees. Used mostly in countries that have the metric system of measurement. Also known as Centigrade.
- **chinook**: A warm wind in the Rocky Mountains that may occur after cold weather.
- **cold front**: The leading edge of a cold air mass displacing warmer air in its path. See occluded front, warm front.
- **cyclone**: A wind system rotating around a low-pressure centre, anti-clockwise in the northern hemisphere and clockwise in the southern hemisphere. The opposite of an anticyclone or a high pressure system.
- **depression**: An area of low pressure, a low, or trough.
- **doldrums**: An area noted for calm or light and variable winds, located between 30 degrees north and 30 degrees south latitudes near the equator.
- **El Nino**: A weather phenomenon that occurs in the eastern and central equatorial Pacific about every four to seven years. Winds change direction and sea temperatures rise in the affected area. The changes can disrupt weather patterns in the tropics and can affect jet stream winds above the Pacific, altering storm tracks and creating unusual weather patterns in various parts of the world. See also La NiÃ±a.
- **Fahrenheit temperature scale**: A temperature scale where water at sea level has a freezing point of +32 degrees and a boiling point of 212 degrees. More commonly used in areas that observe the Imperial system of measurement.
- **flash flood**: A flood that rises and falls with little or no advance warning.
- **foehn**: A warm dry wind on the lee side of a mountain range, whose temperature is increased as the wind descends.
- **front**: The transition zone between two air masses of different temperatures. In a cold front, cold air displaces warmer air in its path. A warm front is the opposite. In an occluded front, also known as an occlusion, a cold front overtakes a warm front.
- **gale**: Force seven to 10 on the Beaufort Scale: a wind with speeds from 28 to 55 knots (32 to 63 miles per hour).
- **high pressure system**: An area of high pressure with winds that rotate clockwise the in northern hemisphere and anti-clockwise in the southern hemisphere. Also known as an anti-cyclone. It is the opposite of an area of low pressure or a cyclone.
- **hurricane**: A tropical cyclone with wind speed higher than 65 knots in the North Atlantic, Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico and in the eastern North Pacific Ocean. West of the International Dateline they are known as typhoons and cyclones in the Indian Ocean.

- **Indian summer**: A period of abnormally warm weather in mid to late autumn with clear skies and cool nights. A first frost normally precedes this warm spell.
- **jet stream**: An area of strong winds concentrated in a narrow band in the upper troposphere of the middle latitudes and subtropical regions of the northern and southern hemispheres.
- **La Nina**: A weather phenomenon that involves unusually cold ocean temperatures in the equatorial Pacific. La NiÃ±a occurs less often than El NiÃ±o.
- **low pressure system**: An area of low atmospheric pressure rotating in the same direction as the earth. This is anti-clockwise in the northern hemisphere and clockwise in the southern hemisphere. Also known as a cyclone, it is the opposite of an area of high pressure or anticyclone.
- **monsoon**: A seasonal wind in the Indian Ocean and South Asia, blowing from the southwest from April to October and from the northeast during the rest of the year. The monsoon is usually associated with the heavy rain that it brings when it blows southwest across southern India.
- **ozone layer**: A layer of the upper atmosphere that has a high proportion of oxygen in the form of ozone. It filters ultraviolet radiation from space.
- **precipitation**: Any form of water, liquid or solid, that falls from clouds and reaches the ground.
- **ridge**: An elongated area of high atmospheric pressure. The opposite of a trough.
- **sirocco/scirocco**: A hot wind blowing from the Libyan Desert across the Mediterranean into southern Europe, often bringing dust and sometimes accompanied by rain.
- **tornado**: A violently rotating column of air between a storm cloud and the surface of the earth. It occurs most frequently in the United States between the Rockies in the west and the Appalachians in the east.
- **trade winds**: Prevailing winds throughout most of the tropics, part of the general circulation of the atmosphere. They blow northeaster in the northern hemisphere and southeast in the southern hemisphere.
- **tramontana**: A cold, dry wind that blows down from mountains, especially the wind that blows into Italy from the Alps.
- **tropics/tropical**: The region of the earth located between the Tropic of Cancer (23.5 degrees north) and the Tropic of Capricorn (23.5 degrees south).
- **tropical cyclone**: A warm core low pressure system which develops over tropical, and sometimes subtropical, waters.
- **tropical depression**: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface winds are 38 miles per hour (33 knots) or less.
- **tropical storm**: A tropical cyclone in which the maximum sustained surface winds are from 39 miles per hour (34 knots) to 73 miles per hour (63 knots). At this point, the system is given a name to identify and track it.
- **tropical wave**: In the Atlantic, a type of atmospheric trough oriented north-south, which moves from east to west across the tropics causing areas of cloudiness and thunderstorms. Tropical waves can lead to the formation of tropical cyclones
- **trough**: An elongated area of low atmospheric pressure. The opposite of a ridge.
- **typhoon**: The name for a tropical cyclone with sustained winds of 74 miles per hour (65 knots) or greater in the western North Pacific Ocean. This same tropical cyclone is known as a hurricane in the eastern North Pacific and North Atlantic Ocean, and as a cyclone in the Indian Ocean.
- **wind chill**: The calculation of temperature that takes into consideration the effects of wind and temperature on the human body. Describes the average loss of body heat and how cold the temperature feels.
- **wind shear**: The rate of wind speed or direction change with distance. Vertical wind shear is the rate of change of the wind with respect to altitude. Horizontal wind shear is the rate of

change on a horizontal plane.

Web, website

Capitalise Web, but website and webcast lower case.

weekend

Not week-end. In American style, use over the weekend, not at the weekend.

week-long

Hyphenate as an adjective.

well

Hyphenated when serving as an adjective, but otherwise no hyphen when following a modified noun. The well-read man was well mannered.

West

Capitalise it when used in a political sense.

West Bank

Western

Capitalise for a book or film type.

Western Hemisphere

Western Sahara

Western Samoa

See Samoa

Western Wall

Not Wailing Wall.

Wheeler-dealer

Note hyphen

Whet, wet

Whet means to sharpen, hence whet your appetite.

which

See entry for that, which

whiskey, whisky

Whiskey is Irish, American and the general term, but whisky is Scotch and Canadian. Scotch as a synonym is acceptable.

white-collar

Adjective -- note hyphen.

White House

May be used as an alternative to the U.S. administration.

white paper

Government information paper. Two words, lower case.

whiz-kid

Note hyphen, one z.

WHO

World Health Organization (Geneva). See www.who.int

who, whom

Who is the subject, whom the object of a verb. As a rough guide as to which word to use, substitute he or him for the who or whom and see which makes sense. But we should follow common usage and be ready to use who as the object where this sounds and looks more natural, e.g. Who she met at the midnight rendezvous was not yet known.

wicketkeeper

One word in cricket.

wicketkeeper-batsman

Hyphenated. Cricketer who is a recognised batsman but who also keeps wicket when his side is fielding.

wide-, -wide

Industrywide, nationwide, worldwide have no hyphen. Wide-open, wide-bodied, wide-eyed, wide-awake are hyphenated. Widespread is an exception.

widow

Either of these is all right: the widow of President John Smith or the wife of the late President John Smith. The widow of the late President John Smith is tautological. Use the late only of those recently dead, not for instance of someone like John Kennedy who has been dead for several decades.

Wi-Fi

A popular wireless networking technology that uses radio waves to provide wireless high-speed Internet and network connections for devices such as computers, mobile phones and video games.

wind farm

Two words.

withhold

Not withold. But threshold.

woes

Acceptable in a headline for the sake of brevity but avoid such journalese as economic woes in text.

word processor, word processing

No hyphen.

workforce

One word.

World Bank

Acceptable contraction for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development. See www.worldbank.org

World Council of Churches

Based in Geneva, the WCC is a Christian organisation dedicated to the search for Christian unity. It brings together some 350 churches, denominations and church fellowships in more than 110 countries and territories, representing more than 560 million Christians. See www.oikoumene.org

World War One/Two

Not First/Second World War. Not WWI/WWII.

World Wide Web

A collection of documents and other resources in hypertext markup language linked via the Internet by hyperlinks, or URLs. They may contain text, images video and audio.

Shorten to Web, but website, but webcast, webmaster.

worldwide

No hyphen.

worship, worshipper, worshipped

wrack, rack

Use wrack only for seaweed and wrack and ruin. Otherwise use rack.

wreaked

Not wrought. She wreaked vengeance.

writedown

One word as a noun, two words as a verb.

writing

General principles stated by H.W. and F.G. Fowler hold good:

- Prefer the familiar word to the far-fetched.
- Prefer the short word to the long and the single word to the circumlocution.
- Prefer the concrete word to the abstract.
- Prefer the Saxon word to the Romance.
- Avoid pompous words like ongoing, escalating, prestigious, meaningful, facility. More often than not we can also do without special, key, dramatic, major, giant, large-scale, massive and crisis. Modish words like confrontation substitute polysyllabic vagueness for the crisp precision of (in this case) clash, dispute or even war.

clichÃ©s

News stories relying heavily on phrases that have become stale through over use are like paintings done by number. They convey information but lack life or freshness. Avoid clichÃ©s that exaggerate or over-simplify e.g. the postage-stamp country, the oil-rich sheikhdom.

Some clichÃ©s to avoid:

- In diplomacy and politics: face-to-face talks, on key issues, top-level meeting, headed into talks on, spearheaded a major initiative, rubber-stamp parliament, lashed out, landmark agreement.
- In disasters: mercy mission, airlifted/rushed to hospital, giant C-130 transports, massive aid, an air and sea search was under way, disaster probe, sifted through the wreckage.
- Of violence: lone gunman, strife-torn province, embattled city, baton-wielding police, stone-throwing demonstrators, steel-helmeted troops braced themselves for, police swoop, pre-dawn raid, staged an attack on, (tautologically) anti-government rebels, (tautologically) armed soldiers. Avoid armed police unless writing about a country where the police are normally unarmed. Then explain.
- Of industrial trouble: top union leaders, bosses, in a bid to settle, hammer out an agreement.

euphemism

Euphemism, beloved of bureaucrats and social scientists, seeks to cloak reality, sometimes unpleasant, in innocuous words. Shun it. Except in quotation, write elderly people not senior citizens; kill not terminate with extreme prejudice; poor not disadvantaged, died of cancer not passed away after a fight with cancer.

jargon

Technical and professional jargon has no place on the Reuters file unless you are writing for a narrow, specialist audience and are certain that your story is not likely to interest a broader readership. Backwardation might have a place without explanation in a report written uniquely for the gold market on a dull trading day, but if gold hits a high in a time of crisis your story should explain it or convey the meaning in simple terms without using the word itself.

Similarly, stories should not contain jargon associated with a specific profession, least of all our own e.g. do not use stringer in a story about a journalist. Use freelance journalist. Think carefully before using quotes laced with jargon. Paraphrase instead.

Journalese stems from importing into the text language used as shorthand in headlines. Some examples to avoid: Aimed at ... amid reports that... burgeoning (growing)... cutback (cut) ... dubbed (called)... due to (when what you mean is because of)... economic/fiscal woes ... embattled... giant (large) ... global (unless we mean literally that)... hit by fears that... lash out.. long-time foe... looks set to... major (big, large) ... massive (big) ... meaningful (real, significant) ... modalities (means, procedures) ... mum (silent)... OKs (approves) ... oil-rich... parameters (limits)... probe (inquiry) ... reportedly.. rocked by .. the statement came as... war-torn.

long words and clumsy titles

Avoid unnecessarily long words and clumsy strings of names and titles. Foreign Minister Amr Moussa is fine. Under-Secretary for Military Procurement Major-General Abdul Karim al-Razzak is not. Split up such names and titles; either the Under-Secretary for Military Procurement, Major-General Abdul Karim al-Razzak, or Major-General Abdul Karim al-Razzak, under-secretary for military procurement. Here are some long words commonly and unnecessarily used when there is an acceptable shorter and simpler version:

Synonyms

- additional - more
- alternative - other
- approximately - about
- attempt - try
- confrontation - clash, dispute
- construct - build
- cutback - cut
- demonstrate - show
- dispatch - send
- discover - find
- escalation - rise, increase
- establish - set up
- extinguish - put out
- facility - plant, base etc.
- finalise - complete, finish
- following - after
- large-scale - big
- manufacture - make
- modalities - means
- negotiations - talks
- numerous - many
- participate - take part
- permit - let
- requirements - needs
- sufficient - enough
- target (verb) - aim at
- transportation - transport

metaphors

A fresh and vivid metaphor can add much to a story. But avoid mixed metaphors, e.g. The Egyptian swimmers walked away with the championships, and metaphors whose literal sense is absurd e.g., a growing bottleneck, which would solve rather than aggravate a problem.

repetition

Avoid excessive repetition of words and of stereotyped descriptions of people or things, but do not overdo the search for variations. If you are writing about Myanmar call it Myanmar and not the Southeast Asian country. It is better to repeat the United Nations than to avoid repetition by calling it the world body. It is better to repeat the word base than call it a facility.

reported speech

Do not retain the present indicative in reported speech. Change is to was; are to were; will and shall to would; has and have to had. Thus it is: He said it was ... not he said it is ...

In news agency style, there is an exception in lead paragraphs that have the source at the end instead of the beginning of a sentence, where to avoid the present indicative would lead to lack of clarity or smack of pedantry. For example, it is acceptable to write in a lead paragraph: Giant Oil Corp will order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard in Korea next month, the company said. If the source were at the beginning, we would write: Giant Oil Corp said it would order three supertankers from the Pusan shipyard ...

spin

Spin can be insidious and subliminal, conveyed in words and phrases that trip off the tongue or flow easily onto the page but disguise an agenda. “Operation Iraqi Freedom” was the name the United States gave to the military campaign in 2003 that it said was designed to liberate Iraq. We wrote that the United States invaded Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein.

verbs

Verbs bring action and life to a story but the wrong verb can indicate bias on our part. The verb to say is usually the best, neutral choice in reporting a speech or statement.

Alleged, claimed or maintained could imply that Reuters does not believe a statement and noted, pointed out, recalled or emphasised suggest that we do. Use announced with care. Only competent authorities have the right to make announcements.

Avoid concede, which implies an admission of guilt or previous error. Prefer said. Do not write refute (which means disprove) when you mean deny or reject.

Other potentially partisan verbs to avoid include admitted, asserted, affirmed, contended, stressed, suggested.

Come, leave and give are verbs too often misused in flabby phrases. Go for positive construction. Avoid limp phrases like The demands came when... The fire left six people dead... or The strike left commuters angry... Demands do not come; people make them. Fires do not leave people dead, they kill them. Strikes anger commuters, not leave them angry.

Also avoid continued (or worse, ongoing), especially in the lead paragraph. The word gives the impression of monotonous action. Finally, there is always a better verb than 'to get'.

writeoff

One word as a noun, two words as a verb.

WTO

World Trade Organisation. Based in Geneva and launched in 1995 to supervise existing international trade accords and provide a forum to negotiate agreements and adjudicate in disputes.

WWF

The new official name for the World Wide Fund for Nature. Explain somewhere in the story.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 11:34, 19 October 2009.

XYZ

Contents

- 1 Xerox
- 2 yard
- 3 yardstick
- 4 year ends
- 5 yoke, yolk
- 6 youth
- 7 zero, zeros
- 8 Zuider Zee
- 9 ZULU

Xerox

A trademark, never a verb. Use photocopy.

yard

To convert to metres multiply by 9 and divide by 10, precisely multiply by 0.914

yardstick

year ends

Financial, fiscal (tax), company and crop years rarely coincide with calendar years so explain clearly in the text which year is referred to, e.g. The budget target deficit for the financial year ended March 2002 was... or Cocoa production rose 14 percent to 100,000 tonnes in the year ended September 2001. Take care with crop-year dates as the old crop can be harvested and the new crop planted in the same year. To refer to the 2002 crop can be dangerously ambiguous. Also, Commodity producers sometimes also have marketing years for produce that differ from the crop year. In such cases spell out the year referred to and when each starts and ends. Organisations such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the International Coffee Organisation produce statistics, based on different years.

yoke, yolk

Yoke for oxen and yolk of an egg.

youth

Boys and girls aged 13 to 18.

zero, zeros

Zuider Zee

Not Zuyder Zee, Netherlands.

ZULU

A term used by Western military forces to mean GMT.

Category: The Reuters General Style Guide

This page was last modified 20:18, 28 November 2008.

Sports Style Guide

Reuters sports service needs to be fast, informative, reliable, accurate and entertaining. Sport is big business and growing all the time. It moves markets but it is also entertainment and our coverage should reflect that. We need speed and breadth. Subscribers want news not only of competitions themselves but of the run-up to the competitions and their aftermath. They want to know about the personalities involved in and out of competition, the managers, agents and entrepreneurs who run the sports and the federations who make the rules. In sport there is an insatiable appetite for statistics and historical data as well as a delight in the colourful character or the noble loser.

For Reuters to keep its reputation for accuracy, reliability and quality, correspondents and sub-editors need to be consistent and clear in the way they report and handle news and statistics. This guide, set out alphabetically, is intended to help. It is designed to be used alongside the general Reuters style guide. Some items that occur very frequently in sports copy appear in both sections.

This page was last modified 15:28, 9 July 2009.

A-Z guide to Reuters sports style

Contents

- 1 Achilles - as
- 2 backhand - break point
- 3 caddie - crowd
- 4 defeat - dramatic
- 5 evening - free kick
- 6 girl - gully
- 7 halftime - ironically
- 8 jargon - kilometres
- 9 lady - long-off
- 10 major - morning
- 11 names - only
- 12 pace bowler - quarter final
- 13 rack - rugby positions
- 14 saint - stretcher
- 15 team mate - Tri-nations
- 16 UEFA - yards
- 17 To go Reuters general style guide, click here.

Achilles - as

- **Achilles'** - Cap A and apostrophe, as in Achilles' tendon.
- **ahead of** - Use before.
- **All England** - No hyphen. The home of Wimbledon tennis is the All England Club. One of badminton's top events is the All England championships.
- **all-rounder** - Hyphenated.
- **Alpine** - Capital A, e.g. Alpine skiing.
- **American Usage** - Some of the main differences between British and American usage in sport:

All Star - Adjective. Game of top players in their field. Also player picked for such a game e.g. The All Star quarterback â'¦

assist - Statistical category used in ice hockey, basketball etc referring to the final pass to someone who scores a goal/makes a basket. Does not just mean help â'¦

hockey - Use ice hockey for the sport on ice and hockey on grass.

game - Never match. Road games or on the road, not away games.

field - Baseball and American football are played on fields not pitches.

inning - Inning singular, innings plural unlike cricket where both singular and plural are innings.

MVP - Most valuable player i.e. player of the match or season, spelt out at first reference, then abbreviated.

officials - Baseball has umpires. NBA, NHL, NFL use referees.

overtime - Games played beyond regulation time are in overtime, not extra time.

rookie - Noun and adjective meaning new or first year player e.g. "in his rookie seasonâ¦"

spelling - In American sports use American spelling e.g. center, maneuver, defense, offense, ballclub, postseason, preseason, lineman, line up, halfback, doubleheader.

sports - Used in plural. American sports, not American sport.

teams - Take a singular verb e.g. New York is playing San Francisco, the team is on the road. Teams with plural names take plural verbs e.g. The Chicago Bears are in town, Houston leads the division but the Saints play tonight.

- **America's Cup** - The sailing trophy has an apostrophe.
- **appeal** - The verb takes the preposition against e.g. Real Madrid appealed against the UEFA ruling.
- **as** - Overused, misused and lazy conjunction especially in sports copy and leads to link two developments that may be only loosely connected or occur at different times. The result is clumsy and sometimes meaningless.

e.g. Indian weightlifter Krishnan Madasamy became the first competitor to be stripped of medals for doping at the Commonwealth Games on Saturday as swimmer Ian Thorpe's historic quest for seven titles failed.

The sentence should be split in two or and used in place of as.

As also implies a continuing action or state so should not be used for a sudden or one-off action. Goals are sudden events in a game of continuing action.

Examples: Champions Arsenal ended their run of four successive defeats in unconvincing fashion on Sunday as an own goal by Aaron Hughes gave them a 1-0 win at Fulham...

would read better as...

Champions Arsenal ended their run of four successive defeats in unconvincing fashion on Sunday, earning a 1-0 win at Fulham with an Aaron Hughes own goal ...

backhand - break point

- **backhand** - One word in tennis and badminton).
- **batter** - Batsman in baseball.
- **biannual, biennial tournaments** - Better to write twice yearly, every two years.
- **bogey** - One over par in golf, note spelling. Can be used as a verb e.g. Woods bogeyed the seventhâ¦
- **boss** - While this word may have pejorative or slang connotations outside sport it is acceptable in sports copy as an alternative to manager/coach to avoid repetition.
- **Bosnia** - Not Bosnia Herzegovina.
- **bounce back** - A clichÃ© to be avoided in sports copy.

- **boy/girl** - Anyone over 18 is a man or woman.
- **break point** - Two words in tennis.

caddie - crowd

- **caddie** - spelt with ie in golf. To caddie as a verb.
- **cancel** - Matches or races that have been called off but are to be held at a later date are postponed. Those that are scrapped completely are cancelled. If an event is postponed we should give the new date if available.
- **capitals in sports titles** - Capitals are used where the title is attributed directly to a named individual e.g. "FIFA President Sepp Blatter said â'¦" but not when the title only is used e.g. "The president saidâ'¦" or when using the title in general e.g. "FIFA presidents have always been drawn from South America or Europe â'¦"
- **Champions League** - Capital C and L, no apostrophe.
- **chequered flag** - Not checkered flag.
- **claycourt** - One word as an adjective e.g. The Barcelona claycourt tournament â'¦ but two words as an adjective and noun e.g. The slow clay courts at the Foro Italico â'¦
- **clichÃ©** - Sports reporting is vulnerable to clichÃ©, often prompted by less-than-articulate sports figures themselves. The "sick as a parrot" and "over the moon" variety is easily spotted but tired, old and often meaningless phrases sometimes creep into copy almost unnoticed. The main culprits are listed alphabetically in this guide. Particular attention should be paid to overused sporting hyperbole on the lines of â'¦ "Soccer icon George Best, major star of the legendary Manchester United side who won the crucial, hard fought European Cup final in 1968 against veteran Eusebio's Benfica side ...

Some to avoid:

crash out

crucial (crucial cup tie)

hard fought

historic win

made history

icon

just (just four minutes from time, just three runs short)

key (key player, key fixture)

legend

major

star, superstar

veteran

- **contractions** - Avoid contractions such as couldn't, didn't, wasn't, weren't, can't, there's, it's in copy except in direct speech. Use the two words: could not, was not, were not, it is etc., unless you are quoting someone.
- **conversions in sport** - Sport uses only metric measurements except for American sport and golf where yards and feet are used and sailing where nautical miles are used. In boxing involving U.S. fighters and aimed at a U.S. market conversions into imperial may be added for height, weight etc. otherwise there is no need to convert in brackets. All currencies must show a conversion into dollars at first reference.
- **convince** - The verb is transitive and needs an object. You must convince someone. **e.g.** Andrew Symonds failed to convince selectors he was back to his best â'¦ not Andrew Symonds failed to convince on his return from injury. An alternative is to use the adverb e.g. Andrew Symonds batted convincingly...
- **coolly** - Ronaldinho coolly tapped the ball home not cooly which is an unskilled oriental labourer according to the OED.
- **crowd** - Takes a singular verb.

defeat - dramatic

- **defeat** - A team is defeated by another not to it e.g. After Bolton's 2-0 defeat by Arsenal â'¦ not to Arsenal.
- **delight** - To delight is a transitive verb and needs and object e.g. Marat Safin delighted Russian fans with a neat chipâ'¦ not Marat Safin delighted with a chipâ'¦
- **different** - Different from, not different to.
- **distances** - In athletics, swimming etc we express distances as: 400 metres hurdles/400 metres freestyle (metres in plural). Say: the 400-metre pool, 100-metre track etc. Metres is always written out, never abbreviated to m. Kilometres are always abbreviated to km.
- **double fault** - Two words in tennis.
- **drop shot** - Two words in tennis.
- **disaster/tragedy** - Do not use disaster or tragedy for sporting contests because this devalues the word. Losing a football match is not a disaster. A stand falling down and crushing fans is.
- **downhill** - One word in Alpine skiing.
- **dramatic** - Usually unnecessary. A penalty shootout is by its nature dramatic. Similarly last-minute goals, match points, athletes tumbling on the track.

evening - free kick

- **evening** - Do not refer to evening or morning games because these vary round the world. Use the GMT time or say â'¦ "later on Thursday, earlier on Monday" etc.
- **extra cover** - Two words fielding position in cricket.
- **fast bowler** - Two words in cricket. Use only for genuine speedsters. See pace bowler below.
- **fears, hopes** - Unattributed hopes and fears are opinions. All fears and hopes need to be sourced e.g. Fears that Manchester United might lose their Premier League title... We need to say who fears as one United fan's fear might be a Chelsea or Liverpool fan's hope.
- **feet** - Feet, inches and yards are used only in golf and in American sport for U.S. audiences, otherwise use metric measurements without conversions.
- **first slip** - Two words in the cricket fielding position.

- **flaunt/Flout** - To flaunt is to display ostentatiously to flout is to defy e.g. By flaunting your wealth you flout convention.
- **flyhalf** - One word for the rugby position.
- **focused** - Not focussed. Overused in sport, especially by sportspeople themselves. Avoid except in quotations. An alternative is concentrated.
- **football** - If soccer use soccer at first reference as several other games around the world are known as football. Similarly with other forms of football e.g. American football or NFL, Aussie Rules (ARF).
- **forehand** - One word in racket sports.
- **Formula One** - Capitalise in motor racing.
- **fractions** - Try to use decimals but where fractions are unavoidable they are written 4-1/2, 6-3/4 etc.
- **free kick** - Two words.

girl - gully

- **girl/boy** - Anyone over 18 is a man or woman.
- **goalkeeper** - One word. Keeper may be used without an apostrophe.
- **Grand Prix** - In capitals in the title of a race or event e.g. The Monaco Grand Prix â'¦ but lower case generally e.g. Michael Schumacher won his first grand prix â'¦ The plural is grands prix.
- **grand slam** - Lower case tennis and rugby, e.g. The Australian Open, first grand slam event of the year â'¦ and â'¦ Ireland are aiming for their first grand slam for 11 years â'¦
- **grasscourt** - One world as an adjective e.g. The grasscourt tournament at the Queen's club â'¦ but two words as adjective/noun e.g. Wimbledon's grass courts are famous â'¦
- **group** - Teams are often divided into groups in competition. We should refer to these in upper case in copy: Group One, Group Two etc. Similarly Group One races in horse racing.
- **guineas** - Horse race: 2,000 Guineas, not 2000 guineas.
- **gully** - Without an e in the cricket fielding position.

halftime - ironically

- **halftime** - One word.
- **hardcourt** - One word as an adjective e.g. The Boston hardcourt tournament â'¦Two words as adjective/noun e.g. The new hard courts were designed for big servers â'¦
- **hat-trick** - Hyphenated.
- **hiccup** - Not Hicough.
- **honorifics** - Do not use titles in sports tories. Don Bradman and Alex Ferguson, not Sir Don and Sir Alex.
- **icon** - Banned on the sports file for describing sporting figures. Use only in religious contexts.
- **impress** - A transitive verb that requires and object: Smith impressed slectors, not Smith impressed during his two-hour innings. The passive, was impressive, is permissible but weaker and less informative.
- **Ireland** - Not Republic of Ireland or Irish Republic.
- **ironically** - Best avoided. What is said or done is rarely ironic, merely coincidental.

jargon - kilometres

- **jargon** - See clichÃ©. Avoid.
- **judoka** - Adjective used to describe someone who plays judo.
- **just** - Often superfluous in sports stories, as in: He has won just one title in 23 years â'¦ and Capriati was just 14 when she turned professional. Avoid.
- **key** - Overused in sports stories as an adjective e.g. key players, key positions, key issues. Usually superfluous, so avoid.
- **kickoff** - One word, no hyphen.
- **kilometres** - Use km, no full point, same for singular and plural.

lady - long-off

- **lady** - Do not use, except in the title of teams at first reference e.g. Fulham Ladies football. Where organisers use the title "Ladies' Championship" as at Wimbledon, substitute "women's championship".
- **leaderboard** - Mostly used in golf, one word.
- **leave** - Using the verb to leave instead of a more accurate and active verb is a sloppy device that frequently creeps in. In sports copy, the device which slows down the story and often means nothing e.g. Two clumsy tackles LEFT Robben suffering from torn ligaments ... should read ... Robben suffered torn ligaments after two clumsy tackles â'¦ And. ... Three defeats in a row LEFT Henman wondering whether he should retire ... translates as ... After three successive defeats Henman wondered whether he should retire ....
- **left-arm spinner** - Slow bowler in cricket, note hyphen.
- **legend/Legendary** - Confine to for real legends e.g. Greek myths, Robin Hood. No sports person is a legend.
- **leg slip** - Fielding position in cricket. Two words.
- **leg-spinner** - Bowler in cricket.
- **Ligue 1** - French first division in soccer.
- **like/such as** - Often we mean such as when we say like. Like means similar to; such as is used when we are offering examples, e.g. â'¦ Players such as Deco and Ricardo Carvalho have increased in value following Portugal's success â'¦ not players like Deco and Ricardo Carvalho â'¦ but â'¦ Bowlers like Andrew Flintoff, who put a lot of pressure on their leading leg, are at particular risk of a stress fracture â'¦ means bowlers with a similar action to Flintoff.
- **lineup** - One word.
- **lineout** - One word in rugby.
- **long-off, long-on** - Cricket fielding positions, note hyphen.

major - morning

- **major** - Avoid as an adjective such as major signing, played a major role, major importance etc. These are hackneyed phrases. Often the adjective is superfluous or can be substituted by important, expensive, big etc. One exception is golf where the four biggest tournaments are known as the majors.
- **masterful/masterly** - Masterly means very skilful, worthy of a master/champion and is the word we most often mean; masterful means imperious, domineering, and is particularly associated with the hero in cheap romantic fiction: Tiger Woods put on a masterly display of putting â'¦ not a masterful display.

- **Masters Series** - Leading tournaments in men's tennis e.g. Rome Masters Series tournament. Note capitals.
- **match point** - Two words in tennis, racket sports.
- **medal** - Do not use as a verb. Competitors win medals. They do not medal.
- **metres** - Spell out in copy. Say â'¦ the 100 metres backstroke â'¦ not â'¦ the 100m backstroke â'¦ Use English spelling, -re not -er. If copy, particularly swimming, mentions several races the word metres can be dropped as understood in later references e.g. â'¦ Thorpe won the 100 metres freestyle and qualified from the heats of the 400 backstroke â'¦ There is no need to convert to feet or yards except in golf and U.S. sport.
- **mid-on, mid-off, mid-wicket** - Cricket fielding positions, note hyphens.
- **morning** - Avoid morning, evening, afternoon because these change around the globe. Use later on Monday, earlier on Tuesday etc.

names - only

- **names** - Always use first and surnames at first reference in results and copy. Surnames at second reference except for Thai names. In Korea and China the surname comes first.
- **nationalities** - Nationalities are written out rather than abbreviated in results and copy, the only exception being U.S. for United States. Use Britain, not United Kingdom or Great Britain. In some sports such as soccer, cricket and badminton and at the Commonwealth Games, England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales compete separately. Use The Netherlands, not Holland, and Taiwan not Chinese Taipei. Make a distinction between North and South Korea.
- **news conference** - Not press conference as this implies non-print media are excluded.
- **off-spinner** - Bowler in cricket, hyphenated.
- **OK** - not ok or okay.
- **Olympiad** - Use only to mean the period of four years between two Olympic Games.
- **only** - Should be placed immediately before the word or phrase it qualifies e.g. â'¦ Didier Drogba has been sent off only once in his Premier League career â'¦ not â'¦ Didier Drogba has only been sent off once â'¦ or â'¦Tiger Woods earned only seven billion dollars last year â'¦ not â'¦ Tiger Woods only earned seven billion dollars â'¦.

pace bowler - quarter final

- **pace bowler** - A quick bowler in cricket who may not have the speed of a genuine fast bowler.
- **Pari-mutuel** - the French tote (not Paris-mutuel).
- **player of the year** - Lower case. Many of these awarded by dozens of different bodies. Storify only the most prestigious and say who is offering the accolade, e.g. FIFA world player of the year Ronaldinho.
- **playoff** - One word.
- **postpone** - Matches or races that have been called off but are to be held at a later date are postponed. Those that are scrapped completely are cancelled. If an event is postponed we should give the new date if available.
- **Portuguese players** - In soccer Portuguese and Brazilian players, like Spanish players, may be known by several names, one name or a nickname and this we use in copy e.g. Pele, Joao Pinto, Edu.
- **practice/practise** - Practise is the verb, practice the noun e.g. â'¦ Maria Sharapova practised with Svetlana Kuznetsova â'¦ but â'¦ Sharapova hurt her knee in practice for the

French Open â’¦
- **Premier League** - The English premier league has an upper case P and L.
- **Primera Liga** - Spanish first division in soccer.
- **prize money** - Two words.
- **quarter-final** - Hyphenated.

rack - rugby positions

- **rack/wrack** - Nerve racking, racked with pain. Wrack is used only for seaweed.
- **racket** - Not racquet.
- **record** - Not new record which is tautological because any record time, distance etc must be new e.g. Asafa Powell set a world 100 metres record â’¦ not â’¦ Asafa Powell set a new world record â’¦
- **reigning** - Redundant. Reigning champions are simply champions.
- **repeat/repetition** - The noun is repetition, the verb is to repeat e.g. â’¦ Carlos Moya tried to avoid a repetition of the tiebreak blunder â’¦ not â’¦ tried to avoid a repeat â’¦
- **repechage** - Contest between runners-up usually for a place in the final, especially rowing.
- **rugby positions** - Run two words together e.g. flyhalf, scrumhalf, fullback, as opposed to soccer positions which are expressed as separate words. Also tighthead prop, inside centre, loosehead prop, hooker.

saint - stretcher

- **saint** - Use St without full point.
- **seasons** - Avoid using seasons because this can cause confusion between the northern and southern hemispheres. A European summer transfer could be described as a close-season transfer, for example, or use the month.
- **see** - Avoid giving inanimate objects the power of sight in sports copy.

Here are some examples: The game saw Steve McClaren take charge of England for the first time .... The bad-tempered match, which saw two red cards ... The club's progress in that time has seen them climb to seventh in the table ...

Better to say ... The game was Steve McClaren's first as England coach. ... The club have climbed in that time to seventh ...

The device is overused in stories applied to people ... Lionel Messi saw his shot go wide ... Shane Bond pitched the ball up but saw Hussey flick it past first slip to the boundary â’¦

It would be tighter to say â’¦ Lionel Messi shot wide ... Shane Bond pitched the ball up but Hussey flicked it past first slip ...

- **semi-final** - Hyphenated.
- **Serie A** - Italian first division soccer, capitalise.
- **set point** - Two words in tennis.
- **set to** - Looks set to is a phrase never used naturally. Often you can say will and source it or could, may, might, is preparing etc.
- **Sir** - We do not use titles in sports, just plain Alex Ferguson, Don Bradman, Bobby Charlton.

- **ski/sky** - Use the verb to ski for winter sports and to sky for a ball hit high (cricket, baseball etc) â'¦ Kostelic skied the Sestriere course â'¦ but â'¦ Gilchrist skyed the ball to long leg â'¦
- **soccer positions** - Written as two words e.g. wing back, centre half, full back, centre forward except for goalkeeper.
- **Spanish names** - In soccer, Spanish and South American players may be known by their full names, one name or a nickname. Use this name we use in stories.
- **sponsors** - Writers should not become billboards for a profusion of sponsors, though journalists must note that it is legitimate to use sponsor names within strict criteria. Usage should be related to the way media in general use sponsors' names.

Sponsors are becoming increasingly aggressive and are more likely to refuse to accredit journalists to events where the sponsor's name is not used. On some occasions it may be counter-productive to refuse to comply with this, but on principle it should be resisted as far as possible.

guidelines:

team names: Sponsors names should not be used in team names when the sponsorship may change on a periodic basis e.g.Austrian club Red Bull Salzburg (correct usage SV Salzburg).Exceptions should be made for teams which began as works sides e.g. Bayer Leverkusen or for teams where sponsorship provides the only means of identity (some cycling teams).

events: Most sporting events have a sponsorship name attached. Where it is clear what the event is without the name of the sponsor, we should drop it e.g. world championships, the FA Cup etc. Where we would have to invent a name to describe the event, we should go along with the sponsor name e.g. Johnnie Walter championship (golf) Florida.

rankings and statistics: sponsors' names should be used only where it is necessary to distinguish them as a legitimate source e.g. Reuters golf rankings. FIFA world soccer rankings is a source in itself and would not need to have a sponsor's name. In soccer, avoid sponsors' names on domestic leagues that can all be described by their category e.g. English Premier League.

- **square leg** - Fielding position in cricket, two words, but hyphenated as as adjective as in the square-leg umpire.
- **stadiums** - Not stadia.
- **star/superstar** - Do not use for sports personalities.
- **straight** - Use British English three successive wins, rather than American three straight wins.
- **stretcher** - Do not use as a verb: Gary Neville was carried off, not stretchered off.

team mate - Tri-nations

- **team mate** - Two words.
- **teams** - Teams and clubs are used as plural nouns, except in American sport, in headlines: Soccer-Arsenal buy Spanish keeper; Cricket-Sri Lanka collapse under England seam onslaught; and in copy: Manchester United said they would not rush into the transfer market in January.
- **test** - Cricket and rugby union test matches, lower case t.
- **third man** - Fielding position in cricket is two words.
- **tiebreak** - one word in tennis.

- **titles of sports events** - Use lower case for: sport names, junior, men's, women's, championship, tournament, meeting, match, test, race, game etc. Use upper case for title of the event e.g. French Open tennis championships, Dutch Open golf tournament. Use singular championship when one title is at stake and plural championships for more than one. E.g. U.S. Open tennis championships (men's, women's, doubles). U.S. Open golf championship (one winner). The name of the sport should precede the word championship, tournament etc.
- **topspin** - One word in tennis.
- **Tri-nations - Southern hemisphere international rugby union competition. Upper case T, hyphen, lower case n.**

UEFA - yards

- **UEFA** - Union of European Football Associations, the governing body of European soccer. Use always in capitals and as singular noun e.g. UEFA said it would â'¦
- **v** - We use v not versus or vs to describe a fixture.
- **veteran** - Overused in sports copy. Avoid as adjective or noun. Be more precise, giving the age of competitor or saying how many tournaments he or she has contested.
- **West Indies** - Not The West Indies (Windies may be used in headlines only).
- **wicketkeeper** - One word.
- **wicketkeeper-batsman** - Hyphenated. A cricketer who is a recognised batsman but also fulfils a wicketkeeping role when his side is fielding.
- **winter** - Avoid using seasons as they are different north and south of the equator. Give the month instead.
- **wrack/rack** - Use wrack only for seaweed. The injured Owen was racked with pain.
- **yards** - Use metres except in golf and American sports.

To go Reuters general style guide, click here.

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:29, 9 July 2009.

Cricket

International cricket is played throughout the year somewhere in the world, either as test matches lasting five days or in its one-day form and most recently the shortened Twenty20 version. It is hugely popular in the sub-continent where top players enjoy fan-fuelled film-star status and is the main summer sport in England, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. The test playing nations are Australia, Bangladesh, England, India, New Zealand, Pakistan, South Africa, Sri Lanka, West Indies (whose states compete as one country). Zimbabwe has been a test playing nation but is currently playing only one-day internationals. Other countries, including Netherlands, Kenya, Scotland and Canada take part in the World Cup (every four years) and minor tournaments. The International Cricket Council (ICC) is the world governing body and each country has its own powerful board of control e.g. the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

The sport often throws up political angles. During apartheid withdrawal of international cricket was one of the main weapons used to isolate South Africa. Zimbabwe has also become a target for cricket boycotts because of political upheavals. Tension between India and Pakistan has often been reflected in tours being called off. Sri Lanka and Pakistan have both suffered cancelled tours, or matches played in neutral countries because of security worries.

Cricket has also been hit by betting and match-fixing scandals, the most infamous involving the late South Africa captain Hansie Cronje. It is also subject to sponsorship wrangles. Cricket is a complex game, rich in statistics. Any cricket reporting should include such statistics. Records are constantly being set for bowling, batting, wicketkeeping, and fielding, for personal achievement, for achievement between countries, for partnerships and for venues. Web sites such as www.cricinfo.com are very useful for such information and Wisden, online and in book form, is the oracle of cricketing statistics.

Cricket reporting should include details of the type of bowling - fast, medium pace, leg spin, off spin etc and some of the strokes employed - cut, sweep, pull, drive etc. Fielding positions such as the slips, short leg and silly mid-on for close catches and third man, long leg and deep point near the boundary, will need to be used to describe how batsmen were dismissed or where they sent a particularly fine shot.

The weather and the state of the pitch are also important factors to mention as these may help fast bowlers or spinners or may favour batsmen. The scoring rate is particularly relevant in one-day matches where teams are limited to (usually) 50 overs.

Bowlers deliver six balls in an over. The toss is also key to how a match might progress as pitches may favour batsmen early on but take spin later. Controversial umpiring decisions produce colourful copy as does player behaviour and their reaction to the decisions.

Contents

- 1 Coverage
- 2 Style points

- 2.1 Fielding Positions
- 2.2 Players
- 2.3 Shots

Coverage

Reuters covers all test matches and one-day internationals. For tests we usually need a preview 36 hours before the match, plus any spot stories on injuries etc leading up to the start. The toss and teams should include brief information on the lineups - who has been left out etc. Scores and scoreboards are sent at the lunch and tea intervals, at the end of an innings and at the close. Correspondents should write a story at lunch (200 words) and update at tea. A quick update at the close should be followed by a wrap and a quotes piece. For major matches correspondents may be asked to update the action more frequently, or to provide highlights for screens. For one-day internationals we generally do not need previews. We run toss and teams, update at end of innings, quick result update, lead and quotes. Sports desk may vary requirements. Scorelines and scoreboards are sent at the end of innings and at the close. For both forms of cricket, sidebars, offbeat stories about venues, history, characters etc and interviews are always welcome.

Style points

Fielding Positions

mid-wicket, mid-on, mid-off, silly mid-on, silly mid-off, deep mid-wicket, leg slip, square leg, short leg, long leg, long off, fine leg, third man first slip, second slip etc, extra cover, deep extra cover, gully (without an e).

Players

fast bowler, pace bowler, spin bowler, spinner left-arm spinner, leg-spinner, off-spinner, medium pacer, wicketkeeper (matches goalkeeper), all-rounder, wicketkeeper-batsman, middle-order batsman, tail ender.

Shots

on drive, off drive, cover drive, hat-trick (hyphenated), test, one-day international (lower case), scoreboard (not scorecard), lineup, West Indies (not the West Indies), day-night match, leg bye, no ball.

Try to avoid programmatic intros where venue, day, innings, test number are all crammed into the

first paragraph. Use the intro for what is newsworthy, dropping some of the standard information lower down. Within a story, scores and bowlers' figures should be written out e.g. 25 for two (25 runs for two wickets), or two for 25 (two wickets with 25 runs conceded). In results and stats boxes this can be abbreviated to 2-25 or 25-2. Cross-check figures in copy with the scoreboard. Any partnerships mentioned should tally with fall-of-wicket figures. Slugs should include a masterslug for tours. This should be the touring side, or SERIES/TRANGULAR etc for one-day tournaments or ASHES for England v Australia test series e.g. BC-CRICKET-LANKA/TOSS, BC-CRICKET-LANKA/GANGULY (for Sri Lankan tour of India.)

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:32, 14 February 2012.

Golf

Golf is a top sport throughout the world and attracts increasing interest as more and more people take it up as a pastime. A highly popular corporate sport, it generates enormous revenue from television and sponsorship with the best professional players earning millions of dollars. American Tiger Woods, who has dominated the men's game since 1999, is one of the best known sporting figures in the world and has signed multi-million dollar sponsorship contracts.

The most important tournament circuits are in the U.S. and Europe - where the competition extends into Africa, the Middle East, Asia, Australasia and both Central and South America - but there are also Australian, African and Asian circuits. Golf is also poised for a boom in China, the world's most populous nation, where 50 new courses a year are expected to be laid out by 2009. Women's golf is also becoming more popular and better financed, with big events in the U.S. and Europe.

With its emphasis on the individual, golf can provide good human interest stories. Players are up against themselves as much as their rivals and the psychological drama of a golfer whose putting goes to pieces, for example, can be compelling.

The vagaries of each course, good and bad rounds, weather conditions, rules wrangles, disqualifications, unusual shots and interference from wildlife can all provide copy. A hole in one is very rare and always worth a story. It may attract a bonus payment. Golfers are often good talkers and will discuss their performance after the round so quotes are easy to come by. Off the fairway some have colourful lives, the pressure of competition producing occasional wayward behaviour, and there are constantly stories to be had of rivalries and jealousies between players.

Golf writers should not get bogged down in the minutiae of hole-by-hole description which can lead to dull copy. They should look for the unusual, the masterly, the colourful and the luckless to make good stories. Too much jargon as in any sport can also slow down the flow of a story.

The four biggest tournaments, known as the majors, are the U.S. Masters, always played at Augusta, Georgia in April, the peripatetic U.S. Open in June, the British Open played in England or Scotland in July and the U.S. PGA, held somewhere in the United States in August. These four and most of the other tournaments which run throughout the year are strokeplay competitions, the winner being the player who takes the fewest number of shots to complete four rounds of 18 holes each. Most tournaments start on Thursday and finish on Sunday with one round per day. If two or more players are tied on the same score at the end of the four rounds, they usually compete in a "sudden death" playoff, playing additional holes until one player wins a hole outright. Most tournaments use a "cut", eliminating players who have scored more than a maximum number of strokes after two rounds, so the field is smaller and rounds completed more quickly on Saturday and Sunday.

For team competitions, such as the Ryder Cup played between Europe and the U.S. every two years, and some other tournaments, matchplay golf is the format. Players, or pairs of players, compete head-to-head and the match is decided by the number of holes won instead of the number of strokes taken. Matchplay can be four ball, with each player hitting his own ball, or foursomes, with teams sharing one ball and taking it in turns to play a stroke.

Coverage

When covering a tournament, we would generally look for a preview, a mid-round story and a wrap at the end of each round as well as side-bars on individual players who may be well known, expected to have done worse or better or who have had something interesting to say. London Sports Desk will advise the level of coverage required. Coverage is expanded for the big four tournaments and the Ryder Cup, when we provide statistics, profiles, course description, features and other background pieces.

Style points

- par - standard number of strokes allotted per hole
- birdie - one under par
- eagle - two under par
- albatross - three under par
- bogey - one over par
- double-bogey - two over par
- triple-bogey - three over par
- caddie - spelt with an ie
- playoff - one word
- prize money - two words
- tee shot - two words
- approach shot - two words
- leaderboard - one word
- matchplay - one word
- strokeplay - one word
- wildcard - one word

Tournament players are permitted to have no more than 14 clubs in their bag during a round and these would be a mix of the following: driver, fairway wood, two-wood, three-wood, four-wood, one-iron, two-iron, three-iron, four-iron, five-iron, six-iron, seven-iron, eight-iron, nine-iron, pitching wedge, sand wedge, variously lofted lob wedges, one or more putters.

Golf is the only sport for which Reuters uses imperial rather than metric measurement.

For example:

"Tiger Woods drove the green with a tee shot of 320 yards and then made the 30-foot putt for an eagle two."

The Reuters style of spelling out numbers from one to nine but then writing out as figures from 10 upwards still applies to hole-numbering and par-value in golf.

For example:

"Poor tee shots at the par-three ninth and the par-four 15th cost Sergio Garcia two bogeys".

The par description of a hole should be hyphenated when used adjectivally.

For example:

"Bob Estes claimed the second win of his career with a one-under-par 70 in his final round of the $3.5 million St. Jude Classic on Sunday."

But:

"Bob Estes was one over par over the front nine before he stormed home in only 30 strokes."

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:14, 1 July 2008.

Motor Racing

Motor racing, particularly Formula One, is immensely popular around the world. Countries compete for the privilege of hosting one of up to 19 Formula One races each season because of the enormous revenues generated by visitors, television rights, sponsorship and advertising and because the huge travelling circus provides local employment.

The season runs from March to October with races almost every fortnight, held on Sunday. The majority of races are held in Europe, but North and South America, Australia and, increasingly, Asia also take part. Manufacturers are keen to hold races in emerging or growing markets so races in some established venues have been dropped. Malaysia, Bahrain and China have joined recently. Despite advances safety design both inside the cars and trackside, motor racing remains a dangerous sport. Several top drivers - Jim Clark, Gilles Villeneuve, Ronnie Peterson, Ayrton Senna - have died taking part over the years. Crashes, shunts and spins are an integral part of any story with break-downs and technical problems also noteworthy.

Competitors are often highly critical of each other's driving and their rivalries are a rich source of copy. Jealousies also occur between drivers in the same team over who should be given priority. But the men behind the wheel are backed by an army of designers, technicians and mechanics making Formula One the most technical of sports. These experts are also increasingly high-profile and well paid and may be poached from other teams, providing more stories.

Formula One is notorious for its secrecy and disinformation. Teams want to keep technical advances and engine or tyre adjustments hidden from competitors and will often put media on a false trail.

Cars must follow strict technical guidelines for safety and to even out the competition and infringements might mean disqualification or the loss of points. Teams push rules to the limit and argue long and hard over such matters, sometimes bringing in lawyers. Each team has two drivers competing separately for the drivers' championship and together for the constructors' championship.

Contents

- 1 Qualifying
- 2 Coverage
- 3 Other motor races
- 4 Style points

Qualifying

Cars must qualify for each Formula One race. Pole position - the front of the starting grid - is determined in qualifying the day before the race, usually Saturday. Qualifying and technical rules are liable to change from season to season.

Coverage

The main preview along with statistical data and background on the race, the championship and the track normally runs early on Wednesday (Tuesday for Monaco). Until the race we run several spot stories a day, many of them generated by team announcements and news conferences. We also cover practice and qualifying which may throw up accident or breakdown stories as well as assessments by the teams afterwards.

During a race we file only for exceptional incidents. Afterwards we run an urgent winner, fast timings and several updates as well as interviews and sidebars. Sports Desk is always in the market for Formula One related stories between races. These may include car testing, contract negotiations, technical news and human interest pieces about the more newsworthy drivers. Countries that do not host races but have drivers and others involved (such as Finland, South Africa, Ireland, Colombia) can also provide interesting stories.

Other motor races

In sports car racing we cover the Le Mans 24 hour race with updates every four hours or so, leads and sidebars. We cover the big name races in the U.S. - Indianapolis 500 and Daytona 500 with previews, running stories and interviews. Other motor races may be newsworthy if there is a big accident, death, destruction or unusual incident/bright but we do not cover them as a matter of course.

Style points

- Formula One - (capitals)
- Paddock - area behind the garages where teams have their motor homes and hospitality and where VIPs lurk and comment can be gleaned.
- Scrutineering - the checking of cars to ensure they comply with technical rules after qualifying and races.
- Tyres - (not tires, except in U.S. copy for U.S. consumption) intermediates, full wets or dries, used according to the weather. Slicks are no longer allowed.
- Lights - it is wrong to say the race started with the green light. In Formula One a race starts when the lights go out.
- Laps - the lap run just before the race starts is the formation lap.
- Grand Prix - in capitals when used as part of a name e.g. The European Grand Prix, but lower case when used generically e.g. Fernando Alonso's third victory in a grand prix this season â'¦ The plural of grand prix is grands prix.
- Engines - we should avoid using the make of engine in team titles as these may change year to year. McLaren, for example is the team name not Mercedes McLaren, though we can describe the machines as "Mercedes-powered McLaren cars" if this is relevant.
- Ballast - the extra weight, usually lead, used to bring cars up to the minimum requirements. It can be moved around the car for maximum effect.

- Plank or skid block - literally a plank running down the middle of the underside of a car. If it gets too worn during a race, the car will be disqualified.
- Marshals - one l only. The men who wave the flags and police the circuit.
- Traction control - one of the so-called driver aids, used to help with cornering and give greater grip in the wet.
- Telemetry - the technical data gleaned from a car.
- Apex - the perfect line through a corner.

Flags:

- Chequered (not checkered) - marks the end of a race.
- Yellow - warning to slow, no overtaking.
- Red - race or qualifying stopped
- Blue - warns of approaching car.

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:14, 1 July 2008.

Soccer

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world. It is the main sport in most countries, played by millions of people, with the professional game generating billions of dollars of revenue in television rights, sponsorship, advertising, marketing and ticket sales. Soccer's world governing body FIFA has more than 200 members and the World Cup played every four years is, alongside the Olympics, the most important event in the sporting calendar.

Reuters is renowned for its soccer coverage which reflects the importance of the sport. Soccer forms around 30 percent of Reuters sports file. Our coverage spans domestic league football, continental club football, friendly and full internationals and includes the major youth international competitions.

Each country has its own powerful football association, which runs the sport domestically. These FAs are in turn affiliated to confederations, which run continental club and international competitions such as the European Champions League or the African Cup of Nations. The confederations are: UEFA in Europe, AFC in Asia, CAF in Africa, CONCACAF in north and central America, CONMEBOL in South America and OFC in Oceania. Reuters uses these acronyms with a brief explanation e.g. European soccer's ruling body UEFA. The confederations are under FIFA's umbrella and the relationship can produce power struggles and disagreements over tournament regulations, funding, player transfers and the laws of the game. These provide good copy. Reuters covers FIFA, based in Zurich, and UEFA, based in Nyon, Switzerland, closely, staffing the main meetings. www.fifa.com has links to confederation and FA Web sites.

FAs and domestic leagues also have a bearing of every aspect of the game and need to be followed closely for stories on discipline including drug abuse, transfers, refereeing, television rights, sponsorship, finance, corruption, match-fixing and other stories.

The clubs themselves also provide a rich source of copy. Some big clubs may be struggling financially and these stories need to be monitored (Lazio, Parma, Fiorentina and Leeds United are recent examples). In others there may be power struggles or takeovers by big companies or wealthy individuals (Manchester United, Chelsea, Liverpool, Manchester City). Many European clubs are quoted companies so their activities will have an effect on domestic equities markets. Soccer is an increasingly global business and big clubs are looking to expand their businesses overseas. Manchester United and Real Madrid have been adept at this. Big clubs have linked with smaller overseas clubs (in China, South Africa etc) as nurseries for new players and to expand their influence. This is a trend likely to become more widespread. Many stories will require equities or general news codes as well as sports codes.

The cult of celebrity is stronger in football than in any other sport and players rival film, soap and rock stars for their pulling power. David Beckham is one of the most famous people in the world. Interviews, human interest stories, offbeat angles all score well for the most famous players. Reuters sports is not, however, in the business of free publicity, celebrity hype or sleaze purveying so stories need to have some sort of sports news angle.

Injuries and recovery news, involving big clubs or well known players/internationals fuel copy. Spates of injury can have a big effect on club or international form and updates are always welcome.

Other off-field stories include violence and hooliganism, which may be at club or international level. England and other northern European countries have a reputation for soccer-related violence and produce good stories about security and police tactics before and during big international fixtures or tournaments. Trouble between club fans can happen anywhere, however, with east European countries, Italy, Turkey and Latin America all hit in recent years. Real disorder, injuries etc should be storified even if we do not regularly cover the league involved. Crowd surges, freak accidents, firework injuries, collapsed stands, fans attacking the referee etc all produce stories no matter where they happen.

Contents

- 1 Scheduled Coverage
  - ♦ 1.1 Domestic football
  - ♦ 1.2 International Club football
  - ♦ 1.3 International soccer
    - ◊ 1.3.1 Friendlies
    - ◊ 1.3.2 Transfers
    - ◊ 1.3.3 Testimonials, benefits, club friendlies
    - ◊ 1.3.4 Age group
    - ◊ 1.3.5 Olympic Soccer
    - ◊ 1.3.6 Women's soccer
    - ◊ 1.3.7 Penpix
    - ◊ 1.3.8 Factboxes
  - ♦ 1.4 Style points

Scheduled Coverage

Domestic football

The depth of regular Reuters coverage of domestic leagues in Europe depends on the soccer profile of the country. We cover England, France, Italy, Spain and Germany in great depth with previews, including injury news before each weekend or midweek of action, fast leads, brief match reports, updates and extra updates/quotes pieces each day/group of matches plus sidebars as merited. The level of cover for cup games especially in early rounds is slightly lower (highlight big matches otherwise general round-up) except in England where the prestige of the FA Cup merits more cover. Some cup semi-finals and all cup finals in these countries will be staffed and arrangements discussed with the soccer editor/desk. On Sunday during the season London puts together a round-up of action in the big leagues. Big five carry their own slug e.g. BC-SOCCER-FRANCE/, BC-SOCCER-ITALY/JUVENTUS

Other European leagues - Other important European leagues such as Portugal, Netherlands and Russia will file weekly league reports as well as fixtures and results. Others will not file only when

there is some significant development. An east European round-up is filed on Monday covering Croatia, Czech Republic, Romania, Bulgaria, Poland, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine. All stories involving leagues not in the top five should be slugged BC-SOCCER-EUROPE/ followed by the country. All bureaux should regularly contribute by filing two or three para brief stories for round-ups of European soccer news issued several times a day by London. These can be injury, transfer, human interest, quotes etc briefs that might not merit a stand-alone story.

Latin American soccer - Our coverage is co-ordinated in Rio de Janeiro by Brian Homewood. We file separate stories on the Argentine, Brazilian and Mexican leagues and a round-up of the other eight. BC-SOCCER-LATAM/SAMERICA). The round-ups usually run early on Monday. We welcome on and off-field stories from any other centres and from the Spanish Language Service SLS which Brian also monitors. Be careful with Latin American names for soccer players the use of which varies depending on which country they come from (similarly Spain and Portugal). See entry in Style Points below.

African soccer - Our coverage is co-ordinated by Mark Gleeson in Johannesburg with a weekly round-up of news from the continent. We also run South African league results. Spot stories from all centres are welcome.

Asian soccer - We cover Japan's J-league and South Korea's K-league with wraps weekly as well as previews and sidebars on merit. Other countries on merit with coverage expanding due to the increasing popularity of the sport in China and elsewhere.

- Middle East coverage - No routine coverage outside Israel though interest is growing and several high profile players are moving to the Middle East to earn big money at the end of their careers.

International Club football

The most prestigious regional club competition is the European Champions League which pits the best performing clubs in national leagues in the previous season against each other in group tournaments and knockout rounds. It is immensely popular and generates millions in advertising, sponsorship and television revenue as well as gate receipts. Europe also has the UEFA Cup where Cup winners and lower-placed clubs compete. In Africa clubs compete for the African Clubs Cup and the Confederations Cup and in South America for the Libertadores Cup.

Champions League - Reuters coverage of Champions League is very thorough. The Champions League starts in August with three qualifying rounds for teams from smaller countries and for third and fourth-placed sides from the top nations. The competition proper begins in September with eight groups of four teams playing on a league basis. Matches are where possible staffed and bureaux should advise Sports Desk well in advance who is staffing and who backstopping in the office. The group stage finishes in December when the top two teams in each group qualify for the knockout stage. The third team joins the third round of the UEFA Cup and the fourth team is eliminated. If teams finish with the same number of points permutations are complicated. Call Sports Desk for advice. The first knockout stage starts end February, followed by quarter-finals in March/April, semi-finals in April and the final in May. Early the day before matches, which are played on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings Sports Desk issues a preview package with team news, statistics etc. Bureaux will be advised on the level of preview material they should provide

and should file by Sunday night. Any breaking news on injuries etc or fresh quotes from coaches/players/club officials that might affect a forthcoming Champions League tie should be filed when it happens irrespective of the package, however London will update the package with late-breaking news. Clubs are required to hold news conferences the day before Champions League matches and these often produce stories.

On matchday - A four-paragraph story on the whistle, followed by a 350-400 word update with match detail then quotes piece after managers' news conference. Managers/ coaches are required to give a news conference and supply players for a mixed zone. Trunk can be updated with extra background/stats or telling quote on merit. If the main news point of the evening arises from the news conference the trunk will need updating. We can run brief sidebars - serious injury etc. A follow-up story should be filed early the next day throwing the story forward. For semi-finals and final and other high-profile games, coverage will be boosted with London reinforcing staff. Sports Desk will advise requirements.

UEFA Cup - A big draw matches sides from very weak leagues with top teams so quality is variable in early rounds. Top leagues supply fifth and sixth placed teams plus cup winners. Others their second or third sides and cup winners. The tournament, usually played on alternate Wednesdays to Champions League, lasts from September to May with group and knockout rounds. Sports Desk will write a preview on the Monday before matches and will advise what input is required from bureaux. Spot stories with team news, big name injuries etc should be filed separately as usual. We may ask for leads from selected games. Any newsworthy items from others - mass sendings off, big scores, hat-tricks etc should also be storified. London will run a wrap and advise requirements. Later rounds (round of 16 onwards) will need match reports with games monitored off television or staffed.

Libertadores - Run in a similar way to the Champions League but qualifying varies from country to country depending on their domestic arrangements.

First round: nine four-team groups. Round of 16 (octavos de final) made up of nine group winners and seven best runners-up which can require more than one playoff. The SLS covers all matches from the first round group stage with a lead. Rio uses all this information to file a single wrap on the night's play (generally Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday). The knockout stages are the same (minus standings). African Champions Cup, Confederations Cup - Coverage co-ordinated by Mark Gleeson in Johannesburg with previews and wrap on similar lines of Libertadores.

International soccer

World Cup finals and continental cup finals (European Championship, African Cup of Nations etc) are designated as special projects with their own teams of reporters covering in the host nation.

The qualifying competitions last up to three years, however, and require detailed coverage from participating datelines. The draws for qualifying competitions are staffed from London (World Cup, European Championship) or by our Latin America, Africa and Asia specialists.

Before matches we need stories on squad announcements which are usually made some 10 days before a match. Send full squad first, first names and surnames with club in brackets, listed under goalkeepers, defenders, midfielders and forwards. Note: Make sure you use the correct Reuters style for clubs which may not always exactly match the way they are referred to locally. If a player

plays in the league of another country do NOT add the name of that country e.g. Thierry Henry (Barcelona) NOT Thierry Henry (Barcelona, Spain).

For main matches (desk will advise) follow the squad announcement with a story detailing who has been left out/included since last match and why, injuries, suspensions etc. The story should contain the word squad in the headline and should add the squad at the bottom. Over the following days file spot stories about the squad, late injuries, player/coach comments etc. For high profile matches Sports Desk will ask for a separate preview from host dateline. Visiting team's home bureau should contribute as well as requesting material for an overall curtain-raiser to groups of fixtures. These are filed early the day before matches. Subsequent news stories affecting the match should be filed as spot and previews updated.

Matchday - Reporters should contact the desk as soon as they are at the venue/in position. For important matches a four-para lead also goes on the whistle (last-second goals permitting). File bare bones of the story with ramifications for qualifying. Update usually 350 words with match description as soon as possible thereafter. On high profile matches we can squirt quick relevant quotes/statistics into a second update. This may be done on desk from television or at venue. High-profile games may need only six paras total. Desk will advise. Quotes piece on high profile games follows after attending managers' news conference/mixed zone. We may need a follow-up the next day. Consult London desk on this.

Friendlies

Friendly can be a bit of a misnomer for these matches as they are often played with intensity. Friendlies - matches that are not part of an official competition - are played during rare lulls in qualifying or before big tournaments, such as World Cup and European Championship. Managers use them to try out new players and combinations of players and usually use substitutes freely to give several players a run-out. Matches between leading soccer nations, big rivals, tournament participants etc can produce good stories and are covered at almost the same level as competitive internationals with squad announcement, previews as requested, lineups, fast lead, update etc. For friendlies between lesser soccer powers consult the desk on the level of cover required.

Transfers

Transfers provide a great deal of off-diary copy. In Europe's top divisions, transfers are allowed only during two periods of the year - July/August and January and activity can be frantic then, but speculation continues throughout the year.

Reuters does not indulge in idle speculation about transfers. However, the development of a transfer of a player from one club to another is sometimes highly speculative but also correct. As soccer writers and reporters we must develop a sense of when a transfer is likely to happen and when it is just newspaper talk. Any journalist covering the sport closely develops this sense or instinct over time.

Sometimes there is no usable source because the clubs involved, the player and his agent will say nothing on the record. Sometimes newspaper pickups may be the only source of a story but we can usually read between the lines and know when a transfer is likely to happen or not. If in doubt, speak to the Sports Desk first. We also keep records of the most expensive signings.

Testimonials, benefits, club friendlies

Not generally covered except when they have specific news value - top name retirement etc. Evaluate on merit. If in doubt, consult.

Age group

We cover the finals of World Youth Cup (under-20) as an assignment, reporting on each match. We provide limited cover of under-17 World Cup.

Olympic Soccer

We do not cover the Olympic Soccer qualifying competitions but we do occasionally do a merited story arising from Olympic qualifying. The Olympic finals consist of both a men's and women's tournament which we cover from the Olympic city.

Women's soccer

Although slowly growing in popularity and widely played especially in China, the U.S. and Nordic countries, we do not, as a rule, cover women's soccer. A few leagues are now professional/semi-professional but the women's game lacks sponsorship and investment to raise its profile. Offbeat brights, features and strong news angles are, however, welcome. We maintain some low level cover of the women's World Cup.

Penpix

Before World Cup and continental championship finals as well as major Cup finals we need squad penpix. Penpix should be brief - three or four lines on each player.

Factboxes

We issue factboxes regularly for soccer e.g. on a leading player/coach who is moving, on a club that has signed several players/on disasters, accidents and deaths/on clubs in trouble or having won a trophy. Before/after big tournaments or cup finals we also run stats with previous winners etc.

Style points

- free kick - two words.
- team mate - two words.
- goal kick - two words.
- extra time - two periods, each of 15 minutes, two words.
- spot kick - two words.
- left back - two words.
- centre forward - two words.

- right wing - two words.
- wing back - two words.
- Goalkeeper - one word, also keeper with no apostrophe.
- Halftime - one word.
- kickoff - one word.
- playoff - one word.
- Champions League - upper case, no apostrophe.
- Nations Cup - upper case, no apostrophe.
- Premier League - upper case.
- Primera Liga - Spain, capitals.
- Ligue 1 - France, capitals.
- Serie A - Italy, capitals.
- Bundesliga - Germany.
- keeper - no apostrophe.
- Group Three - for qualifying groups etc, use capitals.
- Defeat by/loss to - NOT defeat to.
- Metres - not yards or feet.
- hard fought - avoid this clichÃ©. Most competitive games are hard fought.
- crucial - another clichÃ© to avoid.
- star, icon, legend - banned, we never use these clichÃ©s.
- veteran - similarly frowned upon. Give age or number of years in game.
- v - not vs or versus.
- stadiums - NOT stadia.
- World Cup - capitals.
- European Championship - capitals and singular.
- FA - no need to spell out football association, no points, takes a singular verb.
- FIFA - world soccer's governing body, takes a singular verb.
- UEFA - European soccer's governing body, takes a singular verb.
- Players' names - This is a minefield, particularly with Spanish, Portuguese and Latin American names. Broadly speaking Brazilian, Spanish and to some extent Portuguese players are referred to by a single name or two names which could be a first name, a surname, nickname or diminutive (-inho) e.g Pele, Ronaldo, Rivaldo, Ronaldinho, Pauleta, Xavi, Gutii, Ricardo Carvalho. Where a player is known by a composite name such as Roberto Carlos or both names such as Paulo Ferreira, both names should be used throughout. Other Latin Americans are almost always referred to by their surname in the media even though most have a nickname for team mates and friends. Many national associations (from more traditionalist countries such as Peru and Guatemala) give the full names of players including second name and second surname (Jose Maria Perez Gonzalez). In Spanish speaking countries the surname we use is usually the penultimate name, in Portuguese speaking countries it is the last name. In rare cases in Latam a player uses both surnames (like Boca Juniors' Guillermo Barros Schelotto). Some South American players who have worked in Spain/Portugal may end up being called by their nickname e.g. Kily Gonzalez as he is universally known rather than Cristian Gonzalez even in the lineups. Similarly Dutchman Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink is always known as such and never Jerrel Hasselbaink. Turkish players are also often known by their first name at second reference. If in doubt (and there is often doubt until a player becomes established and well known) consult desk or bureau of origin.

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:14, 1 July 2008.

Tennis

Tennis is played in almost every country in the world and differs from many other sports covered by Reuters in that it is equally popular among women and men, both as spectators and participants. The women's game is as high profile and almost as lucrative for top professionals as the men's.

The men's circuit run by the ATP consists of dozens of tournaments round the world, the most important of which are the Masters Series tournaments. Players are ranked by Entry System rankings which are based on results over a rolling 12-month period and are used to determine seedings for tournaments and also by the Champions Race which determines who is doing best that season and who will be ranked number one at the end of the year. Masters Series Tournaments offer more points.

The women's circuit is run by the WTA and uses only one set of rankings. Men's and women's tournaments are usually run separately and last a week.

In contrast, the biggest four (grand slam) tournaments - the Australian Open (January), French Open (May/June), Wimbledon (June/July) and U.S. Open (August/September) - hold women's and men's tournaments together and last two weeks. They are run by the International Tennis Federation (ITF) which also runs the international competitions for men (Davis Cup) and women (Fed Cup). Davis and Fed Cup ties are staged over a weekend usually with four singles and a doubles match played.

Women always play best of three sets. Men play best of three, except in grand slams, Davis Cup and some Masters finals when they play best of five sets.

The U.S. has produced the most top tennis players, but the sport is truly international with men and women from Australia, Sweden, Russia, Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Germany, Czech Republic, Yugoslavia and Switzerland in the number one spot at some time during the last 20 years.

The game is played on different surfaces, from the fast grass of Wimbledon, through hard and synthetic surfaces to the slow clay of the French Open. Different players are suited to different surfaces. Tall, powerful serve-and-volleyers prefer grass and fast hard courts while clay favours players who pound from the baseline with long rallies. Spanish players are renowned for their expertise on clay.

Tennis, with its money and glamour, produces good colour stories on and off court. Petty jealousies, temper tantrums, tensions over disputed line calls, new prodigies (women's tennis in particular has produced some very young champions), upsets, unusual outfits (among men and women), accusations of racism are all good angles. As largely a solo sport, the psychological drama of a match is important - how players react to pressure.

Coverage

Most tournaments have their own websites. Check http://www.atptennis.com or http://www.wtatour.com for links.

The desk will advise coverage requirements. For tournaments outside the Masters with a top-five player taking part we shall usually ask for an early lead only on merit and a wrap at the end of the day. If there is a big development, a top seed knocked out for example or a top-level injury, these can be become quick 4 para separates. Interesting or offbeat idebars, which may be quite short, are always welcome, as are interviews with players.

For bigger tournaments, such as Masters Series and grand slams, coverage will be beefed up with sports desk staff or stringers and we shall need more frequent leads, newsbreaks and four-para separates on selected top-name matches. We shall also need statistics boxes (number of aces, double faults, winning shots at the net etc) on certain matches. WTA and ATP provide statistics on-site at tournaments. At most tournaments we do not cover doubles unless something particularly newsworthy happens or they produce a bright. At grand slams we offer copy from later stages. For Davis Cup world group matches we will need stories after each match and a wrap with quotes. Other matches will require results with copy as advised by Sports Desk, but any ties involving top players will need to be covered.

The home countries of top players should also generate stories - interviews, human interest, injuries, recovery times, births, deaths, marriages, tax evasion, broom cupboard conceptions etc. The best and most colourful players, Boris Becker, John McEnroe, Martina Navratilova, Steffi Graf remain newsworthy after they retire.

Style points

- Tiebreak, backhand, forehand, topspin wildcard, netcord - all one word.
- Double fault, drop shot, match point, set point, break point, prize money - all two words.
- Claycourt, grasscourt, hardcourt - all one word when used as adjectives but two words when adjective and noun. e.g. Spanish claycourt expert Carlos Moya takes on Richard Krajicek whose style is better suited to the grass courts of Rosmalen, Queen's and Wimbledon.
- grand slam - lower case.
- Masters Series - capitals.
- Defeat by - not to.
- Avoid clichÃ©s - â'¦ crashed out â'¦ marathon match (or set) â'¦ hard fought â'¦ dug deep â'¦ bounced back etc. Do not describe tournaments whether grand slams or Masters Series as "majors" (as in golf) as this is a confusing and imprecise term.
- Sets - shown without commas e.g 3-6 6-4 6-4 (never 6-3, 6-4, 6-4) and the winner's details are given first even if the crux of the story concerns the loser, e.g. Champion Roger Federer slumped out of Wimbledon on Saturday going down 6-7 7-6 6-4 6-1 to Spaniard Jose Fernandez â'¦
- Scores - in match reports we should try to get scores into the first paragraph. Rather than say, for example â'¦ Serena Williams beat Justine Henin in straight sets on Saturday â'¦ give the score. It offers more information more quickly.

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:14, 1 July 2008.

Winter Sports

Winter sports, the most spectacular of which is Alpine skiing, are most popular in Europe, but there is also a big following in the U.S., Canada, Japan and, during the southern winter, in New Zealand, Australia and Argentina. The more minor winter sports such as luge, bobsleigh, ski jumping, freestyle skiing, speed skating and biathlon become high profile during the Winter Olympics, otherwise we do not cover them routinely, filing stories only on merit, for example, serious accidents, drugs or other scandals. We cover Nordic world championships. Ice hockey, outside the north American NHL which Reuters covers separately and in depth, also features on Reuters file at world championship pool A level. We report figure skating, popular with television audiences around the world, at World, European and Four Continents championships. All these sports throw up colourful characters from time to time as well as stories of deadly rivalry, triumph over adversity, injuries and oddballs. Drug scandals have also hit winter sports in recent years, particularly the endurance events such as Nordic skiing. Scoring controversies have dogged figure skating.

Alpine skiing (topics code ALPS) is the most internationally popular of the winter sports and we cover it competitively and in depth. As in tennis, women's races are given equal importance with men's. It is the frontline event at the Winter Olympics, stages world championships every two years and holds World Cup races throughout the northern season leading to trophies in each of the disciplines and overall. The World Cup usually starts at the beginning of the northern hemisphere winter, sometimes as early as end October on high glaciers. Occasionally races are run during the southern winter in Argentina and New Zealand but most action takes place in Europe, the U.S. and Canada. The weather plays a key part in Alpine skiing, sometimes frustratingly postponing events for several days and should usually be mentioned in copy as it affects the way competitors perform. Conditions can change during a race. Types of snow - icy, drifting, slush - are also important. In copy include some basic course information, such as name, length, number of gates in slaloms etc.

Alpine skiing comprises four disciplines:

1. Downhill - Dangerous and glamorous, downhillers seek to find the quickest way down a steep course or piste. Falls can be spectacular and injuries serious. Four competitors have been killed in training or competition in the last 12 years. The discipline is not for the faint-hearted. Competitors are timed from top to bottom. Competitors have two training days before the race, allowing them to become familiar with the slope. The best final training timings determine the first 30 to start the race. Starting early tends to be an advantage as the piste deteriorates with every run. We cover these training runs, giving timings and descriptive.
2. Slalom - The most technical of the disciplines, combining pinpoint control with balance and speed as skiers negotiate a slope round tightly packed poles, known as gates. If a competitor misses a gate he or she is disqualified. There are two legs, the first involving all competitors, the second only the 30 with the best times from the first leg. There is normally a gap of two to three hours between each leg. The two legs are run over differently marked courses on the same hill and competitors have no practice runs. The top 30 go in reverse order for the second leg and times from the two legs are added together, so the winner is not known until the final skier has descended. Competitors seeking to improve their first-leg times may overcompensate leading to last-minute falls and adding to the excitement. Each season several slalom races are held in the evening, on floodlit pistes.
3. Grand Slalom - Run as for slalom over two legs but on a longer course with gates further apart so skiers mover faster and turns are less tight.

4. Super-G - Previously known as super-giant slalom, usually run on a downhill slope or part thereof, with gates far apart for speed with only a touch of technical difficulty. Run over one leg like the downhill and almost as fast. There are no training runs.

Competitors earn World Cup points for placings down to 30, as follows:

Place	Points
1.	100
2.	80
3.	60
4.	50
5.	45
6.	40
7.	36
8.	32
9.	29
10.	26
11.	24
12.	22
13.	20
14.	18
15.	16
16.	15
17.	14
18.	13
19.	12
20.	11
21.	10
22.	9
23.	8
24.	7
25.	6
26.	5
27.	4
28.	3
29.	2
30.	1

Points are added at the end of the season and competitors with the most points in a particular discipline win that cup. At the end of the season there is a final weekend of racing all disciplines and usually the winner is decided then, though some strong competitors may have won enough points to go into the final as champions. The male and female skier with the highest points total over all the disciplines wins the most coveted "overall" trophy - which is actually a crystal globe.

It is rare for skiers to excel in both downhill and slalom as they require different training and technique. Each season points are given for a few combined events where the skiers' performances in a slalom and downhill are added together. This is often won by a good all-round skier who has failed to make the podium in either discipline.

Coverage

World Cup events are staffed, winners (and second and third placings if immediately available) filed urgently either from the event or from London desk off television and copy sent quickly. For downhill and super-G file four pars after the winner bulletin, then story updates, factbox on winner (usually from desk) nd any sidebars. Off piste stories about skiers, venues etc are always welcome and previews and aftermath stories regulation.

In slalom and giant slalom, timings and brief descriptive should be filed after the first leg. Do not say someone "won" the first leg but that they were leading. Urgent winner, second and third with four para quick lead and coverage as for downhill after the second leg. Results may at first be provisional but we should not wait for the official timings as these may take more than an hour. Go with early timings and say that they are provisional. They can be updated with official tag later.

Style points

- Alpine skiing - capital A.
- super-G - lower case s, capital G.
- downhill - one word.
- schuss - fast downhill run/section with no turns. Can be used as verb.
- whiteout - loss of visibility through falling snow, low cloud, fog etc.
- to edge - lean on edges of skis for better grip in turns etc.
- World Cup - capitals.
- metres - always spell out (never m).
- km - singular and plural, not spelt out.
- cancel/postpone - for bad weather etc, most races are postponed NOT cancelled as they will be rearranged on another date/venue. Cancellation means dropped altogether. We can also use "called off".
- Winter - don't use the word unless absolutely unavoidable.

table

Category: Sports Style Guide

This page was last modified 15:15, 1 July 2008.

Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 20:25, 16 February 2012.

The Essentials of Reuters sourcing

Our reputation for accuracy and freedom from bias rests on the credibility of our sourcing. A Reuters journalist or camera is always the best source on a witnessed event. A named source is always preferable to an unnamed source. We should never deliberately mislead in our sourcing, quote a source saying one thing on the record and the opposite or something clearly contradictory on background, or cite sources in the plural when we have only one. Anonymous sources are the weakest sources. All journalists should be familiar with the following essentials.

Contents

- 1 Cultivating sources
- 2 Dealing with sources
- 3 Interviews
- 4 Recording information
- 5 When to source
- 6 Location of sourcing within a story
- 7 Gradation of sources
- 8 Next best is a named source
- 9 Single source stories
- 10 Policing sourcing
- 11 Honesty in sourcing
- 12 Honesty in datelines
- 13 Avoiding Manipulation
- 14 Fairness
- 15 Checking back with sources
- 16 Allegations and contentious or vituperative attacks
- 17 Reporting rumours
- 18 Pickups from competitors
- 19 Reports
- 20 Reuters products
- 21 Analysts
- 22 Statements of the obvious
- 23 Picking up from Twitter and social media

Cultivating sources

Sources must be cultivated by being professionally polite and assuring them they will receive fair treatment. This is particularly the case in financial journalism, where the public usually does not have a right to know proprietary corporate information. But even in political journalism, the public in some countries may not have a right to know what government is doing.

The Reuters Code of Conduct applies when it comes to relationships with sources that involve gifts, travel, and opportunities that result from inside information. The basic rule is that we pay our own way. We encourage staff to cultivate sources but also expect them to maintain a detachment from them. We should not cultivate or associate with sources on one side of an issue to a point where there are grounds to question whether the relationship has exceeded the bounds of proper,

professional contact. While it is appropriate to entertain sources, including outside working hours, regularly spending substantial leisure time with them may raise a potential conflict or a perception of bias. A good measure of the propriety of the relationship is to ask whether you would be comfortable spending as much time with another source on a different side of the issue or your beat. If in doubt, seek guidance from your manager.

A romantic or family attachment with a news source or with a person or persons who might be the subject of a staff member's coverage should be disclosed to the appropriate manager. Journalists may also not report on or quote family members in order to avoid a perception of favoritism or bias.

Dealing with sources

When dealing with sources, either in person, by phone, by fax or by e-mail, identify yourself as a Reuters journalist and establish on what basis you are talking. Everyone understands on-the-record, but terms such as off-the-record or on background mean different things in different countries and you must familiarise yourself with the 'ground rules' on the beat or in the country where you work. It is your responsibility to establish what kind of attribution you may use. Be sure your source is also clear and comfortable about the basis on which the information is given. Negotiate the clearest possible form of attribution and always stick to the agreed sourcing. We must also make clear the circumstances in which the source is speaking e.g. "said in a statement", "told reporters in answer to questions", "told Reuters in a telephone interview" or "told a briefing for journalists" (including if the source is anonymous). Do not use passive sourcing as in "it was announced" or "it was learned".

Interviews

During interviews, open-ended questions tend to start sources talking (who did what to whom and how and why?) and glean the best quotes. Closed questions that only allow for a yes or no answer can be useful to get a source to confirm or deny a fact (if you aren't happy with the answer to the first "why" - ask again).

Try to avoid asking multiple part questions that basically allow sources to choose which part of a question they will answer. If several questions are related, use quick follow-up questions, but ask one at a time. Remember to check telephone numbers and the spelling of names with sources. If you doubt or need to double-check the identity of a source you have spoken with by telephone, do not take it for granted that the number the source gives you is genuine. Call back through a company, government agency or organisation switchboard to confirm the source's name, title and authority to speak. Interviewees or their organisations/companies sometimes ask to see the quotes we plan to publish. We should resist such requests wherever possible. If we do have to submit quotes for approval, we should not agree to a quote being materially changed and we should try to give a deadline. We should never submit our story for approval.

Recording information

Record the information a source gives you, either by taking notes or by printing out a hard copy of notes made on a computer, or by tape recording conversations. Reporters are encouraged to learn shorthand. Reporters should keep notes, tapes, video or other information for at least two years. Remember that it may be necessary to for you to prove the accuracy and fairness of your story in court.

If using a tape recorder, obtain the source's permission; undisclosed taping can be illegal in some jurisdictions. If conducting an interview by phone with a broker or analyst, remember that most banks, funds, or brokerage houses routinely record incoming phone calls. Sources can check the accuracy of their quotes by replaying in-house tapes.

If you interview a source over the telephone and are writing the quotes directly onto a screen, save the results and make a printout. You should not write the story directly from the screen onto which you wrote the quotes but instead work from a copy. Otherwise you destroy evidence that could be crucial to you in a lawsuit.

When to source

You must source every statement in every story unless it is an established fact or is information clearly in the public domain, such as court documents or in instances when the reporter, photographer or camera operator was on the scene. Good sources and well-defined sourcing help to protect the integrity of the file from overt outside pressures and manipulation and such hazards as hoaxes. They also help to protect journalists against legal dangers.

When using quotes, make sure the source of the quote is identified as quickly as possible, usually after the first sentence. The reader should not have to plough through a long quote of 2-3 sentences before discovering who is speaking. Do not run quotes from different speakers together. Use a transition sentence (e.g. "It is a really good result," said Jane Evans of Brokers ABC. John Jones of XYZ Brokers disagreed. "That's bad news for the company," Jones said.)

If an event is not contentious it may be legitimate to begin a story with a paragraph that does not contain a source, as long as the sourcing is clearly given high in the story.

Location of sourcing within a story

Aim to source every story within the first two paragraphs. The more important a story is the less flexibility you have with placement of sourcing. Stories of great import should be sourced in the first paragraph. If the first paragraph is contentious, it must be sourced. You must source a contentious statement each time it appears. If you qualify such statements with a word like "alleged" you must be aware that this is no protection against a defamation suit if the material is legally risky.

Alerts require sourcing unless they deal with scheduled economic indicators and company earnings and their official origin is clear or when a scheduled event, such as a presidential inauguration, has taken place in public. Aim to source alerts in one or two words, for example:

CAESAR CROSSES RUBICON - LIVE TELEVISION

POMPEY DEAD - SENATE SPOKESMAN

CAESAR STABBED - REUTERS WITNESS

Newsbreaks should be sourced within the first two paragraphs. You should generally lead your story on the news, not the source, except in the following cases:

- If a story is inflammatory or is an allegation, give the source first. Write, for example: "Gallic leader Vercingetorix accused Emperor Julius Caesar of genocide". Do not write: "Roman Emperor Julius Caesar has committed genocide, Gallic leader Vercingetorix said."
- If the source of a story is a major figure you would also usually put the source at the start. The same is true if the source is a weak one. For example, the secretary of a CEO who confirms that the executive was on his private jet when it crashed. If responsibility for a statement is clear, do not repeat sourcing unnecessarily.
- If there is an element of doubt in a pick-up, you would normally put the source first e.g. "A leading Manchuk newspaper reported on Friday that the President Mabee Iznogud was on the verge of resigning."

Gradation of sources

A Reuters journalist or camera is the best source. Such first-hand reports deal with facts not opinions. Being there enables us to "show" the news, not just tell it - the most accurate sourcing possible. When Reuters is the witness, source the first alert and newsbreak this way:

EGYPT'S SADAT SHOT DEAD BY SOLDIER - REUTERS WITNESS

CAIRO, Oct 6 (Reuters) - President Anwar Sadat of Egypt was shot dead by one of his own soldiers while watching a military parade on Tuesday, a Reuters correspondent on the scene reported.

If you witness a scheduled event that has taken place in full public view and is not contentious, such as a state funeral, you need not source the report in general. But if such a story contains unexpected or contentious elements, source it this way:"Reuters photographer John Smith saw police drag a student into a doorway and beat him unconscious with truncheons."

Next best is a named source

Just because you have a named source does not mean you are free from responsibility for what you quote the source as saying. Whenever possible, sources should be identified by name and position. Such specific sourcing enables readers to gauge the accuracy of a story by telling them how close sources are to the information. Even information from a named source should normally be checked and balanced, especially in a situation of conflict or a negotiation.

While a named source may not be more reliable than an unnamed one, it gives more protection if your story is challenged. It also helps to avoid situations that may lead to journalists having to protect the identity of sources and, along with tapes and meticulous notes, helps to prevent sources from denying that they contributed information to a story. Negotiate hard to identify sources who do not want to be named in copy; with a bit of coaxing, they can quite often change their mind.

The weakest sources are those whose names we cannot publish. Reuters uses anonymous sources when we believe they are providing accurate, reliable and newsworthy information that we could not obtain any other way. We should not use anonymous sources when sources we can name are readily available for the same information.

Unnamed sources must have direct knowledge of the information they are giving us, or must represent an authority with direct knowledge. Remember that reliability declines the further away the source is from the event, and tougher questions must asked by reporters and supervisors on the validity of such information.

Responsibility for reporting what an anonymous source says resides solely with Reuters and the reporter. There is no liability or potential reputational damage to the source, making this the least watertight form of sourcing. We should convey to readers as clearly as possible why we believe the source is reliable, and what steps we have taken to ensure we are not being manipulated. This is done most effectively by the way we describe the source. The more removed the source is from a subject, the less reliable the source is likely to be. Reporters and editors should question the validity of information from a source remote from the action.

Be as specific as possible. Negotiate hard with your source to agree a description that is sufficiently precise to enable readers to trust the reliability of our anonymous sourcing.

"A source" or "sources", "observers" or "quarters" with no further description is vague and unacceptable. So is the use of "informed sources" or "reliable sources". Would we quote an uninformed or unreliable source?

When reporting a corporate deal, describe the source as specifically as possible. Use "a company executive/banker/lawyer close to the transaction" to convey the fact that your source is directly involved in the deal, but "a source close to the transaction" is also acceptable if the source is unwilling to be identified more specifically. "Banking sources", "industry sources" and "financial sources" can imply that the source may not have first-hand information and is therefore less authoritative. Always be as specific as possible.

Stories based on anonymous sources require particularly rigorous cross-checking. We should normally have two or three sources for such information.

Unnamed sources rank as follows, in order of strength:

- An authoritative source exercises real authority on an issue in question. A foreign minister, for example, is an authoritative source on foreign policy but not necessarily on finance.
- An official source, such as a company spokesman or spokeswoman, has access to information in an official capacity. This person's competence as a source is limited to their field of activity.
- Designated sources are, for instance, diplomatic sources, conference sources and intelligence sources. As with an official source, they must have access to reliable information on the subject in question.

Single source stories

Stories based on a single, anonymous source should be the exception and require approval by an immediate supervisor - a bureau chief, head of reporting unit in a large centre, or editor in charge. The supervisor must satisfy himself or herself that the source is authoritative. Supervisors may pre-delegate approval to experienced senior correspondents working with authoritative sources to ensure we remain competitive on timings.

Factors to be taken into account include the source's track record and the reporter's track record. The supervisor may decide to hold the story for further checks if the sourcing is unsatisfactory. For a single source story, the informant must be an actual policymaker or participant involved in the action or negotiation with first-hand knowledge, or an official representative or spokesperson speaking on background. Such information should be subject to particular scrutiny to ensure we are not being manipulated.

The supervisor's approval should be noted on the outgoing copy (in the "edited by" sign-off) so that editing desks and editors in charge have confidence that a senior journalist in a position of authority has authorised the story. If desks still have doubts, they should contact the supervisor concerned.

Policing sourcing

While skilled reporters may have great sources, ultimately the source is talking to Reuters on the understanding that Reuters may choose to publish the information. Thus the source's compact of anonymity is with Reuters.

Reporters are expected to disclose their sources, when asked, to their immediate supervisor, whether bureau chief or reporting unit head. Refusal to do so may result in the story being held for further reporting or spiked.

It is the supervisor's duty to ensure sourcing is appropriate and information is obtained properly, particularly for sensitive stories. Reporters should approach their manager if they have doubts about sourcing. The supervisor should enquire only for legitimate editorial reasons, not out of personal curiosity, and should take into account the reporter's experience and track record before doing so.

Protection of the confidentiality of sources by both reporter and supervisor is paramount. In many cases, questions about the nature or position of the source rather than the name should suffice. Names of sources should never be put in writing, whether in internal e-mails, service messages, Reuters Messaging or other documents that could be subject to disclosure.

Bureau chiefs/reporting unit heads should escalate the issue if they feel uncertain about whether sourcing is appropriate. Usually that will mean involving a specialist editor in charge. If that happens, the reporter should be told. The supervisor should not disclose the name of the source but may discuss the nature, position, access and track record of the source.

Desk editors may not ask a reporter to identify a source by name but may speak to the reporter or the supervisor if they have concerns about the strength of the sourcing.

Reuters will stand by a reporter who has followed the sourcing guidelines and the proper approval procedures.

Honesty in sourcing

Be honest in sourcing and never deliberately mislead the reader. Never cite sources in the plural when you have only one source. In a conflict, dispute or negotiation, always try to speak to all sides, and make clear which side your source is on, or whether the source is a third party.

There are occasions when a newsmaker may tell us more on an unnamed basis than he or she is willing or allowed to say on the record. The off-the-record information is often the real story, or the strongest part of the story, yet the temptation is often to cite the same source twice or more in different guises. We should not quote a source as saying one thing on the record and the opposite, or something that is clearly contradictory, on background. In such cases we should write that the company or government (rather than the specific newsmaker) "declined comment".

Honesty in datelines

Datelines tell the reader the place where the correspondent is writing the story, or is based. We can use a dateline if we have staff (text, pictures or TV) on the spot and we are getting information from staff, or stringers, on the ground. For news stories, we can use a dateline for up to 24 hours after the correspondent left the scene, unless to do so would suggest we witnessed something that happened after we left. We can never use a dateline before we have a Reuters staff member or stringer on the spot. For features, a reporter can retain an off-base dateline for up to a month after leaving the dateline. After that, the dateline must revert to the reporter's base.

There are rare occasions when disclosing the dateline could endanger the safety of staff or the source, or deny Reuters access to information of sufficient public or market interest to justify the story. In such exceptional instances, Reuters may chose to run the story without a dateline. This must be authorised by a specialist editor in charge in consultation with the bureau chief where relevant. The story should provide as much detail as possible on the sourcing to offset the absence

of a dateline, without compromising the source e.g. "A monetary policy source familiar with European Central Bank deliberations".

Example:

Manchukistan bank to cut rates on Thursday

Nov 21 (Reuters) - Manchukistan's central bank will cut its key interest rate by 0.5 percentage point to 2.75 percent on Thursday in an attempt to rekindle flagging economic growth, a source familiar with Manchuk monetary policy said. The source, speaking on condition that his identity and location were not disclosed, said regional central bank governors from around Manchukistan, who sit on the republic's monetary policy council, were convinced that inflation risks were low, partly due to the Manchuk thaler's strength against the dollar.

"The consensus is that they can afford a bold rate cut to try to kick-start growth," said the source, who is familiar with the council's deliberations.

Items that are tabular, numerical or compilations of established background facts do not take datelines. See Datelines

Items based on information received entirely by electronic means at a global centre need not carry a dateline if the dateline risks confusing the reader. This must have the approval of the relevant regional or global editor. If the story is about a company, it should identify where the company is based in the text. The signoff should identify where the story was written to ensure transparency.

Avoiding Manipulation

Every source who talks to a Reuters reporter has a motive. Try to identify that motive and the "spin" that comes with the information, and weigh it against other information you have obtained, generally known background and your own common sense to work out the real story. Your own suspicious mind is one of the best defences against being manipulated. Talk to sources on all sides of an issue, business deal, political dispute, military conflict or diplomatic negotiation. Two sources are always better than one. Seek at least one source from each side.

Give greatest weight to sources that have provided accurate and balanced information before and not misled you previously. Permanent civil servants or diplomats are often more reliable than political employees with an agenda. But be wary even of trusted sources. Remember, a banker's bonus may depend on how favourable a deal he or she can negotiate.

Listen for what is NOT said as hard as you listen to what is said. Sometimes newsmakers disclose a key change in position when they stop saying something they had talked about openly before. Do your homework and know the subject. A reporter who understands the topic and is up-to-date on the news is less vulnerable to manipulation. Check the background of the source as well, particularly if it is a new or unfamiliar source.

Play devil's advocate when interviewing. When doing initiative reporting, try to disprove as well as

prove your story. Look for knowledgeable, independent third parties to help gauge the reliability of information. In mergers and acquisitions, that could be a banker who knows the sector but is not involved in the deal. In politics and diplomacy, it could be a think-tank analyst or a third-country diplomat.

Fairness

Always give people, companies or organisations the chance to answer in your story any charges levelled against them and be familiar with the guidelines on Legal dangers and Attention Editor items and Hoaxes

Checking back with sources

Reuters never submits stories, scripts or images to sources to vet before publication. This breaches our independence. We may, of our own volition, check back with a source to verify a quote or to satisfy ourselves about the reliability of factual information but we also need to ensure that in doing so we do not give sources an opportunity to retract or materially alter a quote or information to their advantage.

Interview subjects or their organisations or companies sometimes ask to see the quotes we plan to publish or broadcast before they are issued. We should resist such requests and explain why this is not our policy. If there is no option but to submit quotes for approval, this decision must be taken in consultation with your manager. We should never agree to a quote being materially changed. It is often effective to give the source a tight deadline for approval.

We may agree to "clean up" a quote linguistically, especially when the speaker is not using his or her own language. We do not, however, massage quotes to change meaning. If a source asks you to change substantial information, either drop the quote or do not run the story at all, again in consultation with your manager.

Allegations and contentious or vituperative attacks

We can never allow our sources to make allegations, contentious statements or vituperative attacks behind a cloak of anonymity. It weakens our credibility and gives the sources an opportunity to benefit at our expense. It is fundamentally unfair to the other party and thus biased.

If quoting unnamed sources on one side of a conflict about what is happening on the other side, use them only for facts, not opinions. If a source wants to make a vituperative attack on an individual, organisation, company or country he or she must speak on the record. We may waive this rule only if the source is a senior official making a considered policy statement which is obviously newsworthy. A story must make clear both that the informant has volunteered the information and

that he or she is an official.

If the person will not speak on that basis we should not use the story. Such a story might begin: "Gaul accused Rome on Wednesday of practicing genocide against its ethnic minorities." The second paragraph would then read something like this: "In news briefing a government official, who declined to be identified, said...".

Reporting rumours

Reuters aims to report the facts, not rumours. Clients rely on us to differentiate between fact and rumour and our reputation rests partly on that. There are, however, times when rumours affect financial markets and we have a duty to tell readers why a market is moving and to try to track down the rumour - to verify it or knock it down. If we hear about a market rumour and it is clearly affecting the market our normal procedure is to:

- Make sure from at least two sources that we are clear what the rumour is without spreading it ourselves.
- Attempt to determine whether it is true or not.
- Write a report, if necessary saying that a spokesman or spokeswoman was unavailable for comment, or that no comment was available and that we are continuing to check. In that report also write why the rumour is moving the market.

There may be exceptional, repeat exceptional, circumstances when a market is moving so rapidly and so violently that we move a story before being able to verify or knock down the rumour. In this case we must:

- Have a second reporter check the rumour while the story is being written.
- Keep the description of the rumour vague so as not to give it additional credibility.
- State in the story that we are checking it urgently.
- If the company or individual confirms the rumour, issue a separate news item with appropriate sourcing at least at the same priority as the original report and thereafter include the development in market reports.
- If the company or individual denies the rumour, we should issue a news item but thereafter we should not normally refer to the rumour unless it persists in spite of the denial and is having a major market impact. If so, specify it is a rumour that has been denied.
- Do not write of unconfirmed rumours; a rumour by definition is unconfirmed.
- Remember: In trying to check unofficial reports of the death or serious illness of major figures, we must not lay ourselves open to a charge of spreading rumours ourselves.

Pickups from competitors

Our job is to alert clients to information affecting their business, whether this information comes from Reuters or is reported by someone else. Pickups must name the source, whether a newspaper, web

site, broadcaster or news agency, even when it is a Reuters rival. Clients would feel we were holding back key information if we failed to name the source. We must name the source even when we are only quoting it in a market report. The sole exception is in alerts when the report is based on remarks on camera by a clearly recognisable source on television (e.g. a government minister or known company executive). The newsbreak must then identify the broadcaster.

The fact that we are quoting someone else's report does not exonerate Reuters from responsibility for providing a file that is accurate, balanced, legally sound and not defamatory. Make every effort to check a pickup. If we are unable to obtain confirmation, make it clear in the story that we tried. In follow-up and subsequent stories, we should still credit the original media report in the body of the story.

When a report by another news organisation (print, online or broadcast) is significantly moving one or more markets, we must immediately issue a story saying why the market is moving at the appropriate priority. That story must be put out by the relevant specialist desk, or by bureau specialists (treasury, equities, commodities, energy). In such cases, the item should not wait for a general news story that confirms or knocks down the report. The story must only be written when we have seen, heard or read the report ourselves. We cannot rely on a trader, for example, to be right on the source of the report and its content. Our story must make clear that the report has not been confirmed and state that Reuters is checking it. These items are for Reuters screen clients only. They may quote any other reputable news organisation, including Bloomberg, Dow Jones, AP and AFP, as the source of the report. The fact that the market is moving is the story and we must tell our customers why fast. At the same time, general news desks and correspondents must make every effort to verify or knock down the report as fast as possible at the appropriate priority. That Reuters story must go to screens also. It may also be sent to media wires on merit. The initial market report should then be updated with the Reuters information and the latest market move.

Reports

Do not use "reports" or "unconfirmed reports" as the basis for a story. You can quote an acceptable source commenting on them, e.g. "the minister said he could not confirm reports that 100 people had died" as long as the report is clearly newsworthy. Avoid using the word "reported" as a source in a headline. If forced to do so for space considerations, specify the source in the lead paragraph. Avoid writing..."it was not known..." In many cases what is meant by this phrase is that the reporter does not know. It is ridiculous to say, for instance, "It was not known who committed the robbery, the murder, planted the bomb". Use a source in such cases, e.g. "Police said they did not knowâ¦"

Usually, there is no need to specify that the report we are quoting is the "latest" report. We normally would not quote anything but the latest.

Reuters products

When quoting figures from Reuters products, clearly source the information (such as market capitalisation, return on equity, price/book ratio) to "Reuters data". This is not necessary for

real-time prices.

Analysts

Do not quote "analysts". Specify their area of expertise e.g. "a strategic affairs analyst with the U.S. Council on Foreign Relations in New York" or "a media company analyst at Bear Stearns in London".

Statements of the obvious

There is no need to source statements of the obvious, e.g. "Destruction of half its army is a serious blow to Rome, military analysts said."

Picking up from Twitter and social media

Social networking and micro-blogging sites on the Internet, such as Twitter, are virtual venues where users around the world may sometimes post information and images of great interest to our clients that are not available elsewhere. This is especially true in countries or circumstances where the regular free flow of information is impeded. We will sometimes need to retransmit such material, or refer to it in text stories. Handled correctly, material from such sites can help us enhance our reporting, and our reputation, and this trend should be embraced.

- It is important to remember that Twitter and similar sites are not sources per se. It is wrong to talk, for example, about "picking up Twitter". It makes no more sense to source a story to Twitter than to source it to "the Internet" or "an email".

- Governments and other institutions are increasingly using Twitter, Facebook and other social networking sites to get official information and news out to journalists and the general public. Journalists using official material from Twitter should mention that the information comes from Twitter (as one does with information from a press conference or press release), especially if Twitter is the only channel used.

- Verification can be a major issue. Textual, video or photographic material might not be what it purports to be, either due to sloppy information from the person posting it or to deliberate deceit. We should be as wary of information or images posted by Twitter etc users as we are of third-party material reaching us in any other way. Strict criteria should be applied in deciding whether to use it, and if we do so, we must be clear about what we know and don't know about its provenance. Journalists should also be aware of the existence of 'sleeper' or 'shadow' Twitter accounts that look like official sources but are designed to peddle misinformation. Checks should be made to verify that any site is indeed official including a basic Google search to ensure it is unique and/or cross-referenced by other reputable sites.

- In many cases, information initially coming to our attention via Twitter will serve simply as a tip, allowing us to check out and report the information ourselves in the regular way, quoting more solid sources. This is as true in financial markets coverage as in political and general news coverage.

- In taking a decision on whether to use citizen material appearing on Twitter, text and visuals editors at HQ and journalists in the field must talk to each other on a constant basis, to ensure we are all on the same page. Among the major factors to consider is the safety of our journalists on the ground and the risk of reprisals against them, especially (but not only) if the material were to prove bogus. In-house counsel should be consulted whenever possible before moving any such images or information from a social networking site. Only senior editors may approve running such material.

- If we go ahead, we should refer in text stories to "Twitter users said/posted xxx", say how much or how little we know about them and whether we were able to contact them directly. We must be honest in stating that we cannot confirm the veracity of the information. We should also provide hyperlinks to the Twitter page in question.

- The potential for reputational harm is very real. Each decision to use material from Twitter or similar sites is a calculated risk, pitting newsworthiness against potential reputational harm. We should use common sense and exercise the utmost caution.

- In terms of visuals, any image should be spiked if it is at all suspicious. We must try to find the source of the visuals and verify the date and location, though on community sites like Twitter or Facebook it is sometimes impossible. We should limit our use of the visual material to the minimum, iconic or essential story-telling images which will allow us to win the play.

- We must be mindful that copyright applies to the Internet. The person posting material might hold copyright, or worse, they might not hold copyright. The material could originate from a private individual, a company or another news organization. Wherever possible, we must seek to find and seek permission from the originator of the material, as we would do for any third-party material accessed in any other way. This can apply to hard news and also lighter material, including funny visual postings that have gone viral and have become stories in their own right

- The "news value" of an item we find online may trump the need to get permission from the copyright holder before running it. However, this should be a decision taken by a senior pictures, TV or text editor, if necessary in consultation with legal counsel. Reporters may not make such a determination without consulting a senior editor. We should be inclined not to use any image without permission if we know it to be commercial in origin or if it is not factually and directly linked to the underlying story (e.g. no general illustrations of topics such as obesity etc).

- To further protect us, we must use the following line on the top of each photo caption when we cannot trace a picture's origin but we believe we should move them: **Editor's Note: This photograph is from a social networking website. Reuters has not been able to verify the authenticity of the material.** (A similar note should be added to video scripts and shot lists). For pictures, we should also keep our policy of sourcing the picture in the body of the caption. We pay for user-contributed pictures that we use on the wire and we should attempt to do the same with Twitter etc pictures (though this is not going to be possible most of the

time, as often the photographer is unknown.)

- Captions, scripts and text stories referring to images must not contain assumptions by the author about what might have happened, even when a situation seems likely. As ever in Reuters journalism, don't go beyond what you know.

- Screen shots of a website should be treated in exactly the same way as a photograph.

- Information on Twitter etc may move markets. If we are told a price is moving because of something on Twitter, we should apply the same rules we use for handling rumours -- on the one hand, establish what exactly the price move is due to, by talking to market participants without fanning the flames or spreading rumours ourselves; on the other hand, simultaneously try to confirm or shoot down the information itself. If it turns out a price is moving because of a particular Twitter post that we are unable to confirm or shoot down, we should say which one it was, give its URL, and also note if possible whether subsequent echoing or re-tweeting of the original post distorted its content.

- Depending on what we can confirm, we may either move a story saying the price moved because of an item posted on Twitter by xxx about xyz which we have been unable to independently confirm; or move a story confirming what the original item said; or move a story shooting down what the original item said.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 20:19, 2 February 2012.

Personal investments by Reuters journalists

The section in the Code of Conduct that deals with information reporting and personal investments by members of Editorial states:

- Before you report on a company in which you or your family has any kind of shareholding or other financial interest you must notify the interest to your manager or bureau chief.
- You must not deal in securities of any company, or in any other investment, about which you have reported in the previous month.
- If you are regarded as a specialist in a particular area of business or industry you must notify your manager or bureau chief of any financial interest you may have in that area or industry.

This reflects a minimum standard that was current when the Code was written. The changing industry and regulatory environments require us to uphold even higher standards to protect, defend and enhance Reuters reputation for accurate, unbiased journalism. The following rules supplement the Thomson Reuters Code of Conduct and the two documents must be read in conjunction. Should there be an inconsistency between this Supplementary Guidance and the Code, the Supplementary Guidance will prevail. The guidance applies to all members of Editorial in all media. IFR staff working on regulated activities must ensure that they also observe all SEC policies

Contents

- 1 Supplementary Guidance
  - ♦ 1.1 1. Investment Disclosure
    - ◊ 1.1.1 Investment registry
    - ◊ 1.1.2 No insider dealing
    - ◊ 1.1.3 Avoid conflict of interest
    - ◊ 1.1.4 Avoid short term trading
    - ◊ 1.1.5 Additional Notes
  - ♦ 1.2 2. Investment Advice
    - ◊ 1.2.1 Who does this cover?
    - ◊ 1.2.2 How do we define investment advice?
    - ◊ 1.2.3 What should Editorial staff avoid in personal communications?
    - ◊ 1.2.4 What should staff avoid in their normal Editorial activities?
    - ◊ 1.2.5 What else do I need to take into account?
  - ♦ 1.3 Further information

Reuters will deal with any breaches of these rules through the normal disciplinary procedures in place in the various countries and regions. You should note that certain breaches could attract civil and criminal liability.

The Code and this Supplementary Guidance must be observed in spirit, not just to the letter. The purpose is to avoid any conflict of interests, any compromise of Reuters reputation and any bias (whether real or perceived) on the part of Reuters journalists, whether they be reporters, sub-editors, editors, cameramen, photographers or other employees of Editorial.

1. Investment Disclosure

The Code and this Supplementary Guidance must be observed in spirit, not just to the letter. The purpose is to avoid any conflict of interests, any compromise of Reuters reputation and any bias (whether real or perceived) on the part of Reuters journalists, whether they be reporters, desk editors, editors, video journalists, photojournalists or other employees of Editorial. Reuters will deal with any breaches of these rules through the normal disciplinary procedures in place in the various countries and regions. You should note that certain breaches could attract civil and criminal liability.

Investment registry

Editorial members of the Editorial Leadership Team [and Editorial staff who report or comment on companies must enter into a secure electronic registry (the Registry) all securities investments (by name, not amount) that they or their immediate family members hold, purchase or sell. Immediate family includes spouses and domestic partners, dependent children plus those individuals over whose investments the journalist has authority. Whenever a relevant change in investment occurs, entries must be updated promptly. New Editorial employees must enter their current investment holdings, if any, into the registry within a period of five business days from starting. For the avoidance of doubt, staff must include in the Registry details of any short term trades including spread bets etc. In addition, senior editorial managers shall make an open disclosure of their investment holdings (by name, not amount) and those of their immediate family on the Julius editorial internal website at the beginning of each calendar year. "Editorial senior managers" means the Editor-in-Chief and all editorial members of the Editorial Leadership Team. This does not exempt senior editorial managers from entering their investments in the Registry.

No insider dealing

Reuters journalists must not engage in or facilitate inside dealing and must remain cognizant of the possibility of inadvertently doing so.

Avoid conflict of interest

Journalists of all media (and members of their immediate families) must not buy or sell securities of entities about which they have written, commented or reported recently or about which they intend to write, report or comment on in the near future. The test is whether the editorial activity might continue to have an impact on the securities, but at a minimum, there should be 28 days (four calendar weeks) between editorial activity and trading of securities. Immediate family includes spouses or domestic partners and children, plus those individuals over whose holdings the journalist has authority. Ownership of mutual funds will normally not violate this guidance. However, ownership of some sector-specific funds may raise conflict-of-interest issues for some journalists and editors. If there is any doubt, the issue should be raised with a manager. Nevertheless, all holdings must be entered in the investment registry

Avoid short term trading

Although this supplementary guidance cannot prohibit short term trading, it is strongly advised that editorial staff do not engage in short term trading activities of any kind.

Additional Notes

The term "securities", comprises the full range of financial instruments (including shares, derivatives, contracts for differences and financial spread bets). The term will be interpreted at its widest to include any transaction where the publication of the writing by a journalist/editor may have a potential impact on its financial performance.

- Where any disclosure of financial interest is required under the Code (e.g. before reporting on a company in which they or a member of their immediate family has any kind of shareholdings or other financial interest), full and frank disclosure of any financial interest is expected, regardless of whether it is direct or indirect interest if there is any potential the editorial activity may affect its performance.
- Where there is a concern about a potential or existing conflict of interest, a senior editor should instruct a journalist to unwind a transaction or take other appropriate action, such as reassigning the writing or editing to another journalist.
- In exceptional circumstances Reuters may bear the properly substantiated transaction costs of a mandated unwinding of a position.
- Under no circumstances will Reuters accept responsibility for any trading loss, including those that may have occurred as a mandated unwinding.
- Reuters reserves the right to require an affirmative declaration of understanding of and compliance with the Code of Conduct and this Supplementary Guidance at any time, including on employment, assignment, promotion or daily log-on to Reuters system.

2. Investment Advice

Most members of Editorial staff are not subject to formal financial regulation since they don't offer direct investment advice to individuals. The guidance below sets out our policy on 'Investment Advice'. Some aspects are straightforward, others are less so. Regulators do not spell out in detail their views on all areas of the subject and news organisations have to interpret what is permissible. Since there is room for interpretation we recommend that you err on the side of caution and seek advice if you are concerned that anything you are doing may amount to offering advice.

Who does this cover?

This guidance covers all Editorial staff within Reuters News -- journalists, analysts, columnists, bloggers, chatroom hosts and any other staff involved in Editorial output. The only exception is for those IFR staff involved in activities that are formally regulated and whose conduct is thus governed by the SEC's policies and processes.

How do we define investment advice?

European regulators have provided guidance on the factors they weigh up when considering whether someone has provided 'investment advice'. The essence of this guidance is that if you communicate directly with an individual, make a detailed recommendation about an investment decision, and take into account that individual's personal circumstances then you may be offering 'investment advice'. Unsurprisingly, regulators leave themselves plenty of space to interpret 'investment advice' more broadly.

What should Editorial staff avoid in personal communications?

In most jurisdictions the direct provision of investment advice is a regulated activity. If you are not formally regulated then, as a general rule, you must not offer advice to potential individual investors.

You should take particular care not to recommend an investment to people you know when you are communicating privately with them. This holds whether you communicate with them in person, over the phone or via email, instant messaging or any other form of electronic communication.

What should staff avoid in their normal Editorial activities?

Occasionally, Editorial staff are asked for personal recommendations by an individual in a public arena -- this might happen in a conversation on a chatroom, via a comment on a blog post, within a live TV discussion, or during a panel debate. If you are being asked something that feels like it might be a request for personal investment advice then err on the side of caution and offer a non-specific answer. Staff engaged in blogging and in chatrooms should take particular care not to be drawn into giving investment advice.

More generally, Editorial staff need to be aware that if they publish or broadcast what appears to be a recommendation on an investment then there is a risk that it could be deemed 'investment advice' by a regulator. The smaller the audience for the content the higher the risk of this and the greater the care required of News staff.

What else do I need to take into account?

Defining 'investment advice' is not straightforward and a regulator will fall back on general principles when it comes across any 'grey areas'. Each jurisdiction has its own regulatory regime so it is difficult to cover every eventuality here. However, we take the European Union's regime to be amongst the most stringent and within it the Financial Services Authority of the UK provides a guide to Principles of Doing Business that gives a flavour of what regulators expect.

Editorial staff should take particular care that they are treating customers fairly and not misleading them over the nature of the information they are giving. In practical terms, there are two ways of minimising the risks of appearing to be offering investment advice:

- Avoid language that suggests you are advising customers to take a particular course of action:

  "Buy now and sell once it has risen 10 per cent" looks like investment advice.

"The fundamentals suggest the stock could rise another 10 per cent" looks more like an expert prediction.

- Avoid making specific forecasts on the prices of assets unless you really need to.

  "Google is heading straight back to $400 by the end of the month" is as specific as you can get.
  "Google looks like it is heading lower, some say a lot lower" carries most of the force of the original without offering any ammunition to regulators or potential litigants by avoiding point forecasts, adding an element of doubt, and introducing the notion of others' forecasts.

Further information

All queries concerning the Registry, insider trading, conflicts of interest, disclosure, investment advice and general obligations under this Supplementary Guidance may be obtained from the legal Financial Regulatory Group led by Martin Oakley.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 16:26, 11 August 2011.

Legal dangers and legal support

The purpose of this guide is not to train you as a lawyer or overwhelm you with the minutiae of the law. Our goal is to give you sufficient information about potential legal dangers you may encounter as a journalist so that you can recognise a legal danger, and you can find someone to help you navigate through it. This guide offers the bare essentials. You should also take all the Legal Dangers eLearning modules to ensure you are familiar with the issues raised and refer to the additional material available in the Editorial Learning Library on the Julius Web site.

If you are interested in a particular topic or would like more information, additional resources are available at the end of the guide. We also encourage you to attend any face-to-face training on legal dangers that may be available where you are.

Contents

- 1 General Tips
  - 1.1 Notes and other records
  - 1.2 Accuracy
  - 1.3 Balance
  - 1.4 Use of quotes
  - 1.5 Unnamed sources
  - 1.6 A healthy dose of scepticism
  - 1.7 Your work has a global reach
  - 1.8 Attention editor
- 2 Defamation
  - 2.1 What is defamation?
  - 2.2 What is a defamatory statement?
  - 2.3 Defamation and images
  - 2.4 Who may sue?
  - 2.5 Elements of action
    - 2.5.1 Element 1 - Is it defamatory?
    - 2.5.2 Element 2 - Does the statement identify the claimant?
    - 2.5.3 Element 3 - Has the statement been published?
  - 2.6 Common defences to a defamation action
    - 2.6.1 Defences 1 - Truth/justification
    - 2.6.2 Defences 2 - Fair comment
    - 2.6.3 Defences 3 - Absolute privilege
    - 2.6.4 Defences 4 - Statutory qualified privilege
    - 2.6.5 Defences 5 - Common-law qualified privilege
- 3 Contempt
  - 3.1 Contempt and court reporting restrictions
  - 3.2 Contempt and protecting your sources
- 4 Copyright

    - 4.1 Copyright infringement
    - 4.2 Copyright and stringers
- 5 Privacy and Data Protection
    - 5.1 Right to privacy and publication of images
    - 5.2 Public and non-public places
    - 5.3 Celebrities
    - 5.4 Pictures of minors
    - 5.5 Publication of private information
    - 5.6 Data protection
- 6 Additional Information and Legal Support

General Tips

Notes and other records

Keep good records of your interviews, notes, etc. If you can, tape them. (In some countries, it is illegal to tape without the interviewee's consent, so if in doubt, always ask for consent before taping.) If you take notes, keep them.

A major pitfall for journalists is typing notes into a computer while listening to a source on the phone, then using the notes straight into a story - thus leaving no notes. This can present a problem if we have to refer to the notes as the contemporaneous record in any dispute about what an interviewee may or may not have said. Always save a copy of such initial notes - print it, date it and file it. A law suit usually lands months, if not years, after you've written the story. A good set of notes is invaluable.

Accuracy

Speed is important but speed without accuracy is an invitation for trouble. Use all the sources available to you to check the accuracy of information. Never forget you can check official sources for information: e.g. if you hear a rumour that a company has filed for bankruptcy in a bankruptcy court, check the court registry as well as with your company source.

Balance

Always obtain the other side of the story. Give the other side every opportunity to comment. If you don't elicit a comment in an initial contact, call again. Record all the times you tried to contact them. If they decline to comment, note that down. These notes will be vital in any dispute to demonstrate you made genuine efforts to make contact and offer an opportunity to comment.

Use of quotes

Quotes from third parties often land us in trouble. Sources may deny they said something, even though you may have heard them say it. Just because you use a quote from someone else does not mean we might not face a suit; we could be accused of passing on a defamatory remark and would be just as liable as the originator. If a quote is potentially defamatory, think carefully about where and how you use it. Make sure you can back it up and have a good record of it and offer a balancing view.

Unnamed sources

Some courts consider that if you cannot reveal a source it could mean you have no source at all - suggesting you might have made it all up. And if a court demands you disclose your unnamed source, and you refuse, you might run the risk of fine or even imprisonment for contempt of court.

A healthy dose of scepticism

"Why are they telling me this?" - Sources might offer information because they hope to get something out of it, usually useful publicity. The information they provide could be useful for their cause, so likely to be skewed. In such circumstances ensure you develop a well-rounded story, with balance, not just one side of it.

Your work has a global reach

You may think certain legal issues have no relevance in your country, but the Internet and our global network mean what you write is published in many jurisdictions other than the one where you write. Something perfectly acceptable in your country could get us into trouble in another. This is particularly of concern in cases of defamation and contempt. When in doubt, alert your editors and seek legal advice.

Attention editor

You should include the warning flag ATTN EDITOR (or ATTN ED) in any story that you think may be legally dangerous or may affect the reputation of Reuters. It gives the desk an early warning and a chance to minimise any risk associated with the report. When a story is flagged ATTN EDITOR the reasons should be explained to the editing desk in a separate message, coded to the relevant desk. You should also code the message to the same codes used to send the story to the desk. The desk receiving such a story should refer it to the editor in charge. All reporters must clearly understand when and how to use the ATTN EDITOR flag. Most of the relevant cases are detailed in

this section.

Defamation

Reuters applies the principles of English defamation law worldwide because English law on defamation on the whole is more stringent than many other countries' laws on defamation and we are more likely to be sued under English law or in a jurisdiction that is based on English law. Damages typically tend to be higher in these jurisdictions than in others. Legal concepts described here generally refer to the English law.

What is defamation?

Defamation is a generic term describing the statement to a third party of words or other matter containing an untrue imputation against the character of another. Libel covers publication (including TV and radio broadcasts, Internet, email, blogs, chatrooms, and so on) and slander covers the spoken word.

What is a defamatory statement?

Generally, defamation is the publication of a statement which 'tends to lower the claimant in the estimation of right-thinking people.' Most countries have left it to the courts to define what is defamatory, although a few have defined it by statute. What may be defamatory in one country or society at one time may not be defamatory in another.

The scope to defame a person or company is very wide but most civil actions fall into three classes:

- Imputations of dishonourable conduct or motives, lack of integrity, lying, deceit, insincerity, hypocrisy, or the misuse of some office or position.
- Disparaging a person in his or her job, e.g. suggestions of incompetence or failure to uphold professional standards, even though no moral fault is implied. You can also defame companies by disparaging their services or products, e.g. by saying their products are defective or dangerous, or their service is substandard.
- Statements causing a person to be shunned or avoided, e.g. implying that a company or an individual is experiencing financial difficulties.

Defamation and images

Defamation is not limited to words alone. Sometimes, it is the combination of pictures and words that cause a problem. A typical example is misidentification of a person in a picture as a terrorism suspect or a criminal. In those cases, there is really no excuse. Another typical example is using a stock photograph to illustrate a potentially defamatory or sensitive story where the photograph shows a person or a company who is identifiable and who do not have any other connection with the story. (E.g. a story about an ailing railway industry illustrated by a picture of a train with the train company's logo clearly visible, or a spread of infectious disease story illustrated with a picture of a person or a hospital that is identifiable). Under those circumstances, the person or the company concerned may have a defamation claim against us.

Who may sue?

The claimant may be an individual, or a company suing in respect of its trading reputation, or any incorporated body whether trading or not. In most countries, a government department, local authority or a political party cannot sue but individuals within these organisations can if they can be identified in a defamatory context, whether they are actually named or not. However, this is not always the case. If in doubt, you should check.

Elements of action

Generally, the claimant must establish three elements:

- The words were defamatory.
- The claimant is identified.
- There was publication.

If the claimant can do that, the action will succeed unless the publisher can offer a defence - truth, fair comment or privilege.

Element 1 - Is it defamatory?

The claimant must satisfy the court that the words defamed him or her in the way they were used - either in the ordinary meaning of the words, an implied meaning, or an innuendo. An innuendo refers to a meaning that is seen in the words by people who have other knowledge of the complainant. For example, if you reported that Mr. X frequently visited 10 ABC Street, it looks like an innocuous statement, but if people who read this knew 10 ABC Street was a den of vice, it would impute bad character on Mr. X and so be defamatory.

Defamation is all about the meaning of words and many statements are capable of more than one meaning. A story which reports an inquiry into the affairs of a company might not be held to mean it

was guilty of some malpractice. The courts must decide whether it means the company is suspected of some wrongdoing and, if so, whether that is defamatory.

Element 2 - Does the statement identify the claimant?

The claimant must show that he was identified in the defamatory matter. The law does not require that the claimant be named. If he is not named in the article or in the broadcast, the law does not even require the world at large would know that he was the person meant. In England, and countries that follow its common law, it is sufficient if people who know the claimant, such as relatives, friends or colleagues, would understand the words to refer to him.

If you write about a group of people and the group is so large that no one individual could claim he is identified, this would be considered a non-identifying statement. Classic examples are: "All lawyers are thieves." and "Journalists write lies." In such cases no one is identified unless there is something elsewhere in the article that points to a particular lawyer or journalist. But if the group is so small that what is said about the group might be seen to refer to an individual or individuals in the group, then everyone in that group could sue for defamation. In such cases, it would be better to name the particular individual rather than describing him or her as a member of the group.

Element 3 - Has the statement been published?

The claimant does not usually have much difficulty to establish that the matter was published to a third party. Publication in this sense does not mean the traditional print media but includes almost all methods of communication, including email, Internet, chatrooms, broadcasts and radio casts. In some jurisdictions, publication of a libel is deemed to have taken place in a letter, even if only the single recipient reads it, but in most countries if the communication is merely to the claimant there is no cause of action because no damage to reputation would arise in the minds of others.

Any person or company taking part in the publication is liable - the writer, printer, publisher and distributor. In some cases, there is a limited defence for printers, distributors or Internet service providers if they can show they took all reasonable care to avoid communicating the defamation and had no reason to believe it would take place.

Common defences to a defamation action

Defences 1 - Truth/justification

It is a complete defence to a defamation action in England that the words are substantially true. Some other countries, however, require the publisher to show that not only are the words true but that they were published for the public benefit.

The defendant publisher is presumed to have published a false statement until the contrary is proved, so truth is a very difficult defence. Under English law, it is not necessary to prove the truth of every single allegation against the claimant as long as the words not proved do not materially injure the plaintiff's reputation.

One difficulty in defending a defamation action is that it is often possible to prove the words true on their ordinary natural meaning, but still fail to prove any inference the plaintiff says the words carry. In this case the defence will fail.

A plea of truth may also fail where the words consist of allegations from the past which might suggest any taint on character still exists. To say of a person 'He is a thief' on the basis of a long-ago theft could not be defended because what is at stake is the current reputation.

Defences 2 - Fair comment

The fair comment defence protects statements of honestly held opinion on matters of true fact. Subject to some conditions, it is a useful defence in reporting comments by others, such as politicians. The fair comment defence will be defeated if the comment is made maliciously (i.e. recklessly or carelessly). For example, when reporting a stinging attack made by a public figure on another person, it is vital that neither the speaker nor the agency which reports his remarks has confused that person with someone else.

When the facts used for the comment are in a report of a privileged occasion, such as a fair and accurate report of the proceedings in a Parliament or of a court, it is not necessary for the publisher to prove the truth of allegations in the course of those proceedings. The defence will succeed even if the allegations made in the Parliament, or on any privileged occasion, later turn out to be false.

Defences 3 - Absolute privilege

Absolute privilege protects the following:

- Statements in parliamentary proceedings (parliamentary privilege).
- Statements during judicial proceedings (judicial privilege).
- Statements in state proceedings (official privilege).
- Statements by public officials protected by statute (e.g. Parliamentary Commissioner, Commissioner and for Local Administration, Health Services Commissioners, the Legal Services Ombudsman).
- Reports of parliamentary proceedings.
- Reports of judicial proceedings. Absolute privilege protects the communication made on the privileged occasion absolutely. The maker of the statement on those occasions need not fear any defamation claim by someone who may feel their reputation is injured.

Defences 4 - Statutory qualified privilege

In addition to absolute privilege, there are occasions of qualified privilege: i.e. the communication is protected, but only to a certain extent. Usually, these include communications when there is a public interest in the statement being made and received. Typical examples include fair and accurate report of parliamentary proceedings and judicial proceedings. Qualified privilege will always be defeated if statements have been published maliciously and privilege will only attach if the reporting is fair, accurate and contemporaneous.

Defences 5 - Common-law qualified privilege

Common-law qualified privilege may protect other statements which fall outside those given statutory protection. Outside the media world, common-law qualified privilege will only arise when the maker of a defamatory statement has a "duty" to communicate the information and the recipient of that information has a corresponding "interest" in receiving it.

Thus, qualified privilege protects employment references and statements made by a company director to the board of directors or to shareholders, but it was almost impossible for the media to use the defence because readers, viewers and listeners had such a wide range of interests and would not necessarily all be interested in any one particular story.

Since 1999, it is recognised in the UK that there may be a qualified privilege defence at common law where:

- The publisher has a legal, moral or social duty to the public to publish the material in question;
- The public has a corresponding interest in receiving it, and;
- The nature, status and source of the material are such to invite privilege in the absence of malice.

The leading judge in the case suggested that courts should consider the following 10 tests when deciding whether a publication should be privileged, although subject to the caveat that these are not the only issues which must be considered.

These are:

- The seriousness of the allegation.
- The nature of the information and the extent to which it was a matter of public concern.
- The source of the information (some sources may have no direct knowledge of the matter; others might have an axe to grind but the lack of authority for the journalist's sources should not in itself be a reason for defeating a plea of qualified privilege).
- The steps taken to verify the information.
- The status of the information (an allegation may have already been under an investigation which commanded respect).
- The urgency of the matter (news is a perishable commodity, the judge said).
- Whether comment was sought from the complainant.
- Whether the article contained the gist of his version.

- The tone of the article (for example does the story adopt the allegation as a statement of fact or does it merely say that the allegation should be investigated).
- The circumstances of the publication, including the timing.

Implicit in the new defence is that the information is presented in as fair, reasonable and even a manner as possible. It is commonly known as The Reynolds Defence after the plaintiff in the case. A number of cases since Reynolds have looked at the 10 factors. In cases where the defence has not been allowed, the journalist concerned has generally failed to seek a comment on the allegations from the claimant, or has failed to write a balanced piece. In some other cases, courts have criticised newspapers for rushing to print with stories that could have waited until all the facts could be checked properly.

Recent developments have further limited the Reynolds defence by requiring that even if the story meets all of the above criteria, it must also satisfy the test of public interest before it can rely on the defence of qualified privilege. It means that the subject matter of the story must be such that it is in the public interest to publish the story. It is not sufficient that the public may be interested in the story. A typical example of the former would be a story on a contaminated food product, which is potentially defamatory of the producer of the food products but it is in public interest to publish a warning about contaminated foods. In contrast, the latter would include stories on celebrity scandals and the like.

The best precaution by a Reuters journalist is always to adhere to the principles of accuracy, integrity and freedom from bias. And remember that speed without accuracy can be a dangerous thing.

Contempt

Contempt of court involves interference with the administration of justice - either in a particular case or more generally with the judicial process. This is not a comprehensive outline of the law of contempt but a guideline on contempt issues most pertinent to Reuters. If you cover court reporting or would like more information on the law of contempt, refer to the additional resources at the end of this section or contact the Legal Department.

What constitutes an act of contempt depends on the law of the jurisdiction. It can cover a multitude of sins from scandalising the court (e.g. by being rude to the judge) to making an unauthorised recording in a courtroom.

Here, we look at two specific acts of contempt that can affect journalists directly. One relates to court reporting and the other to protecting your sources. Again, this is not a comprehensive guideline on the law of contempt and you should refer to the additional material provided at the end of this section.

Contempt and court reporting restrictions

Most democracies uphold the principle of open and public justice. Therefore, the media is usually allowed in courtrooms and may report on court proceedings. However, in most jurisdictions, there will usually be certain restrictions on what the media can report. Such restrictions may be designed to protect the people involved (whether or not they are parties to the proceedings) or to ensure the efficient and effective administration of justice. For example, in most jurisdictions, the media is not allowed to report the identity of a victim of sexual offences or minors. Many jurisdictions also allow judges to impose specific restriction orders on the media for particular cases, for example, in family or domestic cases, to protect the privacy of the parties involved, especially if there are children.

In addition to these special orders or reporting restrictions, some countries also have a general law that prohibits anyone from publishing anything that may give rise to a substantial risk of serious prejudice to the defendant's chance of receiving a fair trial. This type of law is found most commonly in countries with a jury system, as juries are thought to be more susceptible to the influence of the media.

In many countries the greatest danger of contempt arises from:

- Assuming the guilt of the accused.
- Disclosing previous convictions or other information derogatory of the accused.
- Publication of a photograph of the accused if identity is to be an issue at trial or at a police identity parade.
- Publication during a trial of material the jury ought not to be aware of or to be reminded of.

The UK is one country where such a law is very much alive and presents a serious danger to the media. In the UK, if you publish anything that could give rise to a substantial risk of serious prejudice to a fair trial, you are strictly liable. Strict liability means that you will be found guilty of the offence regardless of your intention or how much care you took to avoid committing the offence. If the publication seriously prejudices a legal proceeding in the UK, there is a chance you will be held liable for contempt. In contrast, in the United States, the First Amendment right trumps any concern over possible prejudice to a fair trial. This poses a particular problem for an international news agency like Reuters. For example, where people are arrested and awaiting trial in the UK and the same people are indicted for similar offences in the United States, the media in the UK will be constrained in what they can report. However, such restrictions would not apply in the United States. There are internal procedures for dealing with these issues when they arise and you should refer these to the relevant specialist editors and Legal Department.

Contempt and protecting your sources

Although some countries recognise and protect the right of journalists to protect their sources, your refusal to disclose your source where the information is deemed necessary by a court for the administration of justice can mean that you may be held in contempt of court. The sanctions a court can impose in those circumstances can often include physical incarceration as well as a fine. You must escalate any issues relating to contempt to senior editors and the Legal Department.

Procedure for handling stories that risk contempt of court and their publication on the Internet Any decision whether to publish material from outside the United Kingdom (or other jurisdictions with similar laws) that carries a risk of exposing Reuters to contempt of court proceedings must be taken by the global managing editor and the appropriate global specialist editor in consultation with their equivalents in the affected region.

A decision should be based on consideration of internal and external legal advice that includes an assessment of the probable risk of prosecution, noting that UK contempt is deemed to be a SERIOUS risk of SUBSTANTIAL prejudice. Such a risk should be balanced against the news value of the story. Editorial has the final say on whether to publish and what to publish, having considered all the relevant facts.

In the event of publication, the following should apply:

- The story carried on terminals and our wholesale media wires should carry an advisory that states: (NOTE TO EDITORS: This story is not for use in the United Kingdom [or other jurisdiction], where its publication may be deemed to constitute contempt of court).
- The story should not be carried on reuters.co.uk [or on the local site in another jurisdiction] and should not be included in any categorised online news reports that are sent to UK subscribers. On a case-by-case basis and after consideration of the relevant facts, editorial may decide to carry the story on reuters.com and in categorised online news reports that go to subscribers outside the UK.
- Similar provisions should apply, with necessary regional changes and transmission variations, in other jurisdictions where contempt law applies (e.g. Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Singapore, Malaysia).

Copyright

This part looks at the common problems Reuters encounters with copyright issues, rather than the general principles of copyright law. For an overview of copyright and other related laws, please go to Editorial Learning: Legal Dangers on the Julius Web site.

Copyright protects the skill and labour that produce a literary, artistic, dramatic or musical work once it is recorded in any form, whoever has recorded it. The basic principle is that without permission (usually a licence to reproduce) we are not entitled to make use of a substantial part of another's copyright work and they are not able to make use of a substantial part of any work of ours.

Copyright infringement

Copyright protects "original" work, in the sense that if you created the work independently without copying someone else's work, you own the copyright in the work. One of the golden rules for Reuters journalists is never to plagiarise. Given this rule and the originality threshold, we would never expect a Reuters journalist to be accused of infringing someone else's copyright material.

We have more problems where others use our material without properly crediting Reuters. Often, you will be the one to discover these problems. We describe below what you need to do if this happens to you.

Copyright and stringers

Copyright also becomes important when stringers work for us. The law provides that if a work is created by an employee in the scope of his or her employment, the copyright belongs to the employer. But if a work is created by a contractor, and not an employee, then the copyright belongs to the contractor, unless there is an agreement to the contrary. This is why it is absolutely vital that if you engage a stringer, you should always have them sign a stringer contract with us so that there will be no dispute as to who owns the material they produce for us. Contact the Legal Department if you need a copy of the standard stringer contract.

Applying this to Reuters Editorial, if the journalist writing the story or taking the photographs is an employee, Reuters owns the copyright in the news reports or the photographs. However, if it is done by a stringer, it may be unclear as to who owns the material and it may become a subject of a dispute. So always try to put a standard contract in place when dealing with stringers or at least make it very clear from the beginning in writing who would own the copyright in the material they produce.

What to do if you discover others are infringing Reuters copyright If you discover any content infringement by third parties (e.g. others using Reuters articles in whole or in part without proper crediting), you should bring it to the attention of the Media Sales team in your region. If the infringing party is a non-client, it presents a sales opportunity for Reuters. If it is a client, then the client is likely to be in breach of their contractual obligation and it helps with future negotiations with the client to know about these breaches. If persistent infringement occurs, the matter will be escalated to the Legal Department by Media Sales.

Privacy and Data Protection

The right to privacy is a fundamental human right enshrined in various international conventions and national laws. Some countries provide greater protection than others for individual privacy but the general trend in most countries is towards greater protection of an individual's right to privacy. This has consequences for the media particularly with regard to the publication of photographs but also applies to the publication of private information.

Right to privacy and publication of images

In many countries, the law prohibits the publication of a person's image without his or her consent. This is true of those countries in particular that have adopted or are influenced by a strong civil law

tradition (such as France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, etc.). There is usually an exception, however, if the publication is for the purpose of reporting current affairs, but only if such reporting is in the public interest. (The definition of public interest is discussed below).

This is the rule as it applies to private individuals. For well-known people (such as politicians or celebrities) however, it is accepted that they are a part of current affairs and so long as they are not in a place where they also have an expectation of privacy, their pictures may be taken and used.

In other countries where privacy laws are not as strict and there is no express prohibition on the unauthorised use of a person's image in news reports, you may still have problems with the publication of a picture if it is taken against an expectation of privacy and the publication of the picture does not add anything to the news but is gratuitous.

Public and non-public places

The publication of a picture taken in a non-public place where a person may have an expectation of privacy is likely to infringe the person's right to privacy. However, the boundaries are not always clear-cut. Non-public places, where a person is entitled to an expectation of privacy, are held to include the balcony of a hotel, a private strip of beach, a secluded part at the back of a restaurant and an office. However, in some cases, photographs or footage obtained on a public street or outside a building have been held to infringe the right to privacy where the image captured is particularly distressing or humiliating to the person concerned and it is not in the public interest to publish the image.

It is difficult to lay down any specific guideline in this instance. A good rule of thumb may be to put yourself in the shoes of the subject of the image and consider whether you would feel your privacy was invaded if the image were to be published, and whether you would be able to defend publication on the ground of public interest if we were to publish the image.

Celebrities

Celebrities and well-known people are more likely to bring claims for infringements. In fact, recent developments in this area of law have largely been funded by lawsuits brought by celebrities from minor royals to former supermodels against the publishers of magazines and newspapers. They are more aware of their rights and have the means to litigate. You are advised to be extra cautious if you obtain images or footages that may be of questionable origin or taken in non-public places, especially using telephoto lenses.

Pictures of minors

Always be sensitive when you take and publish photographs of children. In most jurisdictions, minors fall into a special category of protected persons and are also held to be incapable of giving

legally effective consent. Therefore, even if you obtain the agreement of the children to be photographed, it would not necessarily provide any protection against a claim for infringement of their right to privacy if challenged by their families or guardians.

Publication of private information

Given the nature and the type of reporting Reuters does, it is unlikely that it would be held to infringe someone's right to privacy by publishing information that is of a private nature. However, you should always consider whether the detail you are reporting adds to the newsworthiness of the story or whether it is gratuitous information of a private nature whose publication is not in the public interest. Also, many jurisdictions prohibit the identification of victims of particular kinds of crimes (such as victims of rape) to protect their privacy.

A defence against the claim of infringement of privacy is that the publication is in public interest. However, the courts distinguish between what is in the public interest from what is of interest to the public. Salacious gossip or scandal about celebrities or politicians may be of interest to the public but their publication will not necessarily be in public interest.

Data protection

The law of privacy should not be confused with the data protection law. The latter is a separate body of law developed more recently to protect the unauthorised processing and transfer of personal data. Personal data in this case refers to any information that can be used to identify an individual, such as their name, age, gender, address, telephone number, occupation, physical attributes, personal preferences, and so on.

The law provides a special exemption if compliance is incompatible with the purposes of journalism. This means that a journalist is allowed to collect, process and use personal information if such information is required for the purposes of reporting.

This is a complex area where the rules are not clear and there are large differences between countries. If in doubt, you should contact the Legal Department for advice.

Additional Information and Legal Support

The Julius Learning site is a gateway to considerable additional guidance on legal issues but journalists should never shy from seeking expert advice.

In order to ensure that journalists are able to obtain legal guidance and assistance whenever they need it, the General Counsel's Office maintains a global follow-the-sun legal support model, with in-house lawyers on-call and available at any time of day. If you have a legal query, your first point

of contact should be one of the lawyers identified below for your region. If you are unable to contact one of your regional lawyers (for example, given the time of day it is), you should contact one of the lawyers in the region that is in its working day. Click here for the names and contact details of Reuters duty lawyers.

You may also send an email to "Lex Editorial" via an internal email account or lexeditorial@reuters.com via external email account to send a note simultaneously to all the lawyers in the list.

For those based in Britain, you may also contact the duty lawyer at Clifford Chance, an external law firm, for libel or contempt law advice if no in-house lawyer is available. Their contact details are available from the UKI Bureau Chief or the Chief Correspondent. For those in Asia, if no in-house lawyer is available, external counsel is available to provide advice in a number of countries. Their contact details are available from members of the Asia Editorial cluster group and Charlina Kung.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 15:16, 1 July 2008.

Reporting about people

A reputation for accurate, balanced reporting is one of Reuters biggest assets. We must not shy away from painful reality, but we should also seek to minimise any harm to the public through our actions. The people who make the news are vulnerable to the impact of our stories. In extreme cases, their lives or their reputations could depend on our reporting.

When covering people in the news, Reuters journalists:

- Avoid needless pain and offence.
- Treat victims with sensitivity.
- Eschew gossip about the private lives of public figures.
- Avoid sensationalism and hype.
- Seek clear, unambiguous accounts of the facts.
- Are on alert for spin and other forms of media manipulation.
- Are wary of assumptions and bias, including our own as journalists.

A Reuters journalist shows integrity, impartiality, persistence, accountability and humility when covering people. When these principles are applied, we should be able to defend any story to ourselves, our sources and our readers. Here are some guidelines.

Contents

- 1 Stereotypes and value judgments
- 2 Religious, cultural and national differences
- 3 Trauma and taste
- 4 Social responsibility
- 5 Vulnerable groups and easy targets
- 6 Self-awareness and restraint

We must be wary of clichÃ©d references to gender, ethnicity, appearance, age, and sexual orientation. When a story relies on such references, we should ask if this is a Reuters story at all. Some media outlets indulge in casual sexism and the typecasting of minorities. Reuters does not. We do not do pick-ups of these stories either. We should be especially wary of "odd" stories that promote stereotypes and are not particularly funny.

A Reuters journalist must be sensitive to unconscious stereotyping and dated assumptions. Is it really novel that the person in the news is black, blonde, female, overweight or gay? If it is relevant, does the fact belong in the lead or should it be woven in lower down?

Excessive political correctness is as unwelcome as stereotyping. A personality piece based on an interview with a CEO who juggles work with raising five children could make valid references to these personal challenges. A spot news story about this CEO under fire over corporate strategy would not.

Our language should be neutral and natural. When referring to professional groups, plural expressions such as executives and journalists are preferable to gender-specific tags that imply the exclusion of women. But we should avoid artificial words such as "spokesperson" when describing a role. Emotive adjectives and epithets carelessly inserted in copy hold particular dangers. We should avoid gratuitous references to appearance or attire, while recognising the situations when these details are relevant.

We aim to show, not tell. Responsible journalists are sensitive to the implied rebuke in verbs such as "refuse to" and "fail to". The reader should judge people with the facts and quotes we supply, not our interpretations.

Crime reporting requires particular care with race, sexual orientation and religion. Any such information must be strictly relevant and scrupulously sourced. We should be aware of the risk of implying guilt by association. In reporting on killings, we stick to the incontrovertible facts. A particular type of uniform or dress is not proof of religion or nationality.

Responsible journalists are sensitive to the difference between religion and culture, and the fact that they often overlap. Many traditions or beliefs considered religious are actually cultural, limited to a certain region or group.

An attack carried out in the name of a religion should not cast suspicion on all followers of that creed. People who resort to violence are a minority in any religion. But the religious connection is relevant for our reporting if an attacker invokes spiritual beliefs or has links to a group that seeks religious justification for violence.

Finding the proper terms for such groups can be difficult. All main religions have minorities that react to modern life by promoting what they see as the basic, time-honoured principles of their faith. This is fundamentalism but we must be careful about using the term because it is now so widely associated with violence and one particular creed.

We should seek precision with religious descriptions. "Islamist" indicates an emphasis on Muslim principles. The adjective "Islamic" refers primarily to the religion while "Muslim" has both religious and cultural connotations. We must also be clear about distinctions within religions, indicating whether Muslims are Sunni or Shi'ite or noting which Christian denomination is involved.

When covering violence, it can also be difficult to distinguish sectarian from religious or separatist conflict. In cases where the line between nationalism, religion and culture is unclear, we should try to explain the historical and demographic background instead of glossing over the problem with oversimplified tags. Reuters reporters must resist the assumption that their cultural values, religious beliefs or social mores are the norm. When referring to holidays, seasons and weekends, we must be sure the descriptions apply to the region in question, and can be understood by people of different cultures.

We should be suspicious of country stereotypes - the usually negative notions about a national character. These can be offensive and outdated clichÃ©s. References to country stereotypes may be valid in certain well-balanced stories, but we should always proceed with caution, even when seeking to challenge or subvert a preconception.

When reporting on tragedies, we should be sensitive to the risk of implying that a Western life is worth more than an African or Asian casualty. Reuters writes from a global perspective, while applying common sense and news judgment in cases where one group of victims deserves to be highlighted.

In questioning people who have suffered physically or emotionally, our primary responsibility is to seek news through witness statements. A complex story can be compellingly told through the experience of one victim. But we must avoid adding to interviewees' peril or distress. We must always identify ourselves as journalists and be absolutely open about our intentions. Reporters should seek out those who want to talk. Interviewees must be aware that their comments and identities may be widely publicised. When dealing with people who are unfamiliar with international media, we must take care to avoid placing interviewees at risk. In reporting on suffering, a restrained style is often the most effective.

In matters of taste, whether in descriptions of violence or the use of language, the priority is accurate, comprehensive reporting. We do not sanitise violence, bowdlerise speech or euphemise sex. We should, however, exercise judgment to avoid appearing gratuitously offensive or titillating. Where a graphic detail or a profane phrase may offend, we should ask whether the story requires it. If it does, use it but send the story ATTENTION EDITOR with a warning line for readers (e.g. "Contains strong language in paragraph 6"). TV and pictures must exercise care in using graphic material that could damage the dignity of victims and cause their families distress. Ask yourself how you would feel if your clearly identifiable relative were pictured.

The best way to avoid causing harm to the public is by providing the complete facts, all sides of an argument, and the relevant context in neutral prose. Reuters journalists keep digging and questioning. When the access to information is restricted, or a piece of the puzzle is missing, we should say so.

We must be on alert for language that could imply support for one side of a conflict, sympathy for a point of view, or an ethnocentric vantage point. We should, for example, provide the dual names of disputed territories. We must not parrot any loaded expressions used by our sources, except in quotes and official titles. Generic references to a specific country as "the homeland" for example, are unwelcome.

With coverage of crime, security and medical problems, we should offer ample context to help readers assess the risk to their own health or safety, mindful of the danger of inflating public fears through sensationalised reporting.

Security alerts that move markets, cause disruption, or involve a risk to key public figures or institutions are legitimate stories. When covering medical issues, we must beware of instilling false hope with loose talk about miracle cures and scientific breakthroughs. Independent confirmation or expert peer review is required for any story about a major scientific advance. We must avoid hype in the coverage of epidemics, seeking to quantify the statistical risk.

If what seems like a routine murder is getting extensive attention, we should explain why, quoting qualified commentators. Groups with vested interests may seek to exploit or sensationalise crimes through media campaigns. Other crimes may become legitimately iconic by touching a public nerve.

We should always proceed with caution when interviewing children, especially trauma victims and child soldiers. Description of the suffering of children may suffice to convey the drama. When we decide to talk to a child directly, we should be satisfied the interview is crucial to the telling of an important story. The overriding concern must be to avoid exposing a minor to harm and we must do our utmost to minimise the stress of the experience for the subject. In normal circumstances, a reporter needs the permission of the appropriate authority such as a parent, guardian or school authority to interview a child. There are severe restrictions on talking to children involved in criminal proceedings in most jurisdictions and in identifying minors in such cases.

When covering people who are newsworthy because of their profession, we should seek to distinguish between public and private spheres. We should be satisfied that references to the personal lives of politicians, royals or corporate executives are broadly relevant to their role, their policies or their chosen image. Being a public figure should not make every aspect of your life and every member of your extended family fair game. But public figures who bring their families or personal attributes into the media spotlight should expect scrutiny of these areas.

With coverage of rich, famous or powerful people, we are wise to question our sources' motives at every step. We need to be on high alert for smears and self-promotion.

Entertainment stories must meet our rigorous standards. We should not rush to pick up dubiously sourced stories about entertainers just because the coverage would be guaranteed to get wide play. Media celebrities are qualified to talk about the acting profession and the entertainment industry. We should have a good reason for quoting showbiz stars on other matters such as world affairs or politics. We should also be wary of tabloid-style typecasting of public figures such as royals, who may traditionally decline the right to reply.

People stories can bring out the purple-prose writer in all of us. We are wise to consider whether our own emotions - envy, distrust, empathy, pride - may skew our writing and obscure the story.

Before filing a story about people, it can be helpful to imagine how they would react to your words. If they would love the story, you may have been spun. If the reaction is likely to be negative, could you defend your approach as accurate and fair?

Ambition lies behind many of the ethical lapses in the media industry, including the deadly sins of plagiarism and fabrication. Ambition is welcome in news gathering but responsible journalists never sacrifice ethics in pursuit of a byline.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 15:17, 1 July 2008.

Dealing with stringers

Reuters, like many news organisations, uses freelance journalists to supplement its network of staff journalists. We use "stringers" in places where the flow of news is not sufficient to justify the presence of a staff correspondent, in countries where the authorities may not allow Reuters to assign a staff journalist or to cover stories of a specialist nature when we do not have the necessary expertise among our own staff.

We also occasionally use ad-hoc stringers for individual stories and assignments.

Hiring stringers

Utmost care must be taken in hiring stringers that we use reputable journalists who are able and willing to adhere to our rigorous standards of accuracy, objectivity, sourcing and freedom from bias. No individual correspondent should hire a stringer without the explicit approval of the bureau chief or editor in charge. We must exercise the utmost caution in hiring ad-hoc stringers for individual stories.

Preference in hiring stringers should be given to professional journalists whose skills meet our standards. Bureaus should not hire non-journalists as stringers without the explicit approval of the regional managing editor and the relevant specialist editor. Under no circumstances should we hire officials of a government or local authority, members of the armed forces or police and intelligence services or public relations employees to work as stringers.

Stringers must be briefed on our standards of accuracy, objectivity, sourcing and freedom from bias. Regular stringers should be asked to read an abridged version of our Code of Conduct and editorial guidelines. Bureau chiefs should have these documents. Stringers should be asked to acknowledge that they have read the contents and agree to abide by them.

All stringers must be told at the hiring stage that Reuters reserves the right to rewrite the material they provide to ensure that it meets our standards and style and to insert material from other reporters as well as background and context to ensure that their reports are suitable for a global readership. Stringers must be told that Reuters expects to use their byline and be given an opportunity to discuss circumstances when this might not be appropriate.

Training can be offered to stringers who contribute regularly. Such training is at the discretion of the bureau chief and the regional managing editor. Remuneration for stringers will depend on local and individual circumstances. There will be cases of sensitivity where it could be dangerous for a stringer's identity to be revealed because of possible pressure from a government or another employer. In such cases the identity of a stringer should not be divulged to the authorities, members of the public or any third party outside Reuters without explicit approval from a senior editor, who will escalate as appropriate. It should be normal practice, however, for stringers to identify themselves as working on behalf of Reuters. They should not misrepresent themselves.

Handling material from stringers

Bureaus and desks that handle copy or verbal reports from stringers must expect the same standards of accuracy, objectivity, sourcing and freedom from bias as they do from staff. However, because stringers may be less accountable than staff, particular caution must be exercised. Here are some guidelines:

- Apply the "smell" test. A fact or quote may look fine, but does it "smell" right? If not, challenge the stringer to provide more information. If a fact or quote raises a question in your mind, it will probably jar with the reader too.
- Beware of anonymous sources, such as unnamed officials or diplomats, especially if you are not familiar with the stringer's work.
- Insert only relevant background and context into a stringer report, as you would with a staff journalist's report. Extraneous background and context, especially if it is contentious, may get the stringer into trouble with authorities and may get Reuters into trouble with the stringer.
- Be cautious about using stringer bylines on stories that are contentious, contain sensitive material or come from datelines where identifying the stringer may expose the stringer to problems with the authorities. Be aware which stringers are comfortable having their bylines used and which are not, whether because of sensitivities with the authorities or with their primary employer.
- Never add a byline to a stringer story without consulting the stringer, a staff correspondent on the ground, the bureau chief or a specialist editor.
- Preference should always be given to staff coverage of a diarised news story of significant interest, unless the bureau or desk is entirely satisfied that the particular stringer will do as good a job. On major breaking news, staff coverage must be ensured as rapidly as possible unless there are very strong grounds for continuing with stringer coverage alone. Consult your manager if in doubt.
- Apply the same byline policy to stringer copy as to staff copy. When a desk or bureau makes significant changes to the thrust or structure of a bylined news story that is reported or written primarily by the bylined journalist, it will make reasonable efforts to send the story back to the correspondent for a final check. If the journalist cannot be reached in good time, the senior editor on the appropriate filing desk determines whether the story should be issued with the byline or whether it should be removed. Where a byline is used to signal our presence at a dateline, additional reporting names and locations and the name of the writer must be listed at the end of the story as appropriate.
- Never "ghost" a news story under the byline of a stringer who has contributed nothing to the report. Never "ghost" a news analysis under a stringer's byline.
- When in any doubt about a stringer story after performing the above checks, consult your manager.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 15:17, 1 July 2008.

Dealing with threats, dangerous situations and incidents involving Reuters or its staff

Contents

- 1 Threats, Claims of Responsibility and Hostage-Taking
- 2 Dangerous Situations
- 3 Incidents Involving Reuters and its Staff
    - 3.1 When to file a report
    - 3.2 How to file a report

Threats, Claims of Responsibility and Hostage-Taking

We do not encourage groups that use violence for political or other ends to use Reuters as a publicity vehicle. We do not solicit such material and, as with any other news, we do not pay for such material under any circumstances. In the cases that follow, our bureaus need to exercise judgment in deciding whether to report that statements or calls from such groups were "received by Reuters" or "received by an international news agency". This will often depend on the location and is a decision that should usually be taken in consultation with a senior editor.

Apart from filing our own stories first, we should not withhold textual information about threats, claims of responsibility and hostage-taking from other news organisations that ask us for details. In some locations, there may be an agreement to share information among major news organisations and it must be respected by making the material available to others promptly.

Treat a threat of violence such as a bombing in the same way as we treat a rumour. Reuters policy is to report news, not suppress it. At the same time we must avoid gratuitous damage to any individual, group or economic interest by giving circulation to threats that have not been validated. If an airliner is diverted or a building evacuated because of a bomb threat, that is a fact we should not suppress. However, we should be much more cautious in reporting unsubstantiated threats that have not led to significant precautionary action.

If such a threat is made by telephone or letter to a Reuters office it should be reported at once to the police and to the regional general news editor, who should decide whether to issue a story. It is imperative that the general news editor be consulted as soon as possible once immediate action has been taken as judged necessary by the bureau to diminish risk to life. Normally, we would have to be convinced of the credibility of the caller and have some publishable reaction from the authorities concerned before issuing a story. In such cases, we should make clear in the story that we have reported the threat to the authorities.

Statements, telephone calls and other messages claiming responsibility for violent acts must be handled with great care. Notes, and if possible a recording, should be made of telephone calls.

An authenticated statement from a recognised group claiming responsibility for an attack can be used on news merit and sourced in the normal way if we know the incident has taken place. If we get neither confirmation nor a publishable denial we may in exceptional circumstances report the

statement. If a statement or telephone call cannot be authenticated as coming from a recognised group or comes from a hitherto unknown group, treat it with grave reserve.

Never use such material as the basis of a story on an incident that has not yet been independently reported. If it refers to an incident that has taken place, report the claim of responsibility only if you have good reason to believe it is not a hoax. In such a case, say why the report appears credible and what steps you have taken to check it.

Follow this procedure if you receive statements, photographs or audio or video tapes from groups holding hostages:

- Try to advise the hostage's organisation and, through them, the hostage's family that the material has been received.
- Try to get the original, or a copy, of the information to the hostage's organisation as quickly as possible. At the same time in those countries where the rule of law operates inform the police or other appropriate security authority.
- Any one service of Reuters (e.g. text, video or photos) that receives such material must immediately inform the others. Text should file a story at the appropriate priority if the bureau is satisfied that the material is authentic.

Dangerous Situations

The safety of our journalists, whether staff or freelance, is paramount. No story or image is worth a life. All assignments to zones of conflict and other dangerous areas are voluntary and no journalist will be penalised in any way for declining a hazardous assignment.

Journalists on the ground have complete discretion not to enter any danger zone. While all reporting of conflict and other hazardous environments involves an element of risk, you must avoid obvious danger and not take unreasonable risks. Writers may be able to produce as good a story at a safe distance as from the front line. Camera operators and photographers need to be closer to the action but using their experience and training often can enhance their security through careful choice of position.

You may move into a dangerous environment only with the authorisation of your superior. Wherever possible the senior regional editor for your discipline should be consulted. Assignments will be limited to those with experience of such circumstances and those under their direct supervision. No journalists will be assigned to a danger zone unless they have completed a Hostile Environment training course.

Your bureau chief/cluster chief and the regional Managing Editor are responsible for your safety and may order you not to run risks that you may consider acceptable. You must advise your base of your movements and of any significant increase in the danger you are exposed to whenever you have the opportunity to do so. If you decide a situation has become too dangerous and you withdraw unilaterally, that decision will be respected.

Do not move alone in a danger zone. If you travel by road do so as a passenger whenever possible, using a driver known and trusted by you and your companions, who is familiar with the terrain and with potential trouble spots. Your vehicle should be identified as a press car unless that would

increase the risk. When possible, at least two cars should travel together at a reasonable distance apart in case of a breakdown. Do not travel in military or military-style vehicles unless you are with a regular military unit.

While correspondents, photographers and camera operators should work closely together in trouble zones, the differing nature of their work imposes different degrees of risk on them, and they may be safer working separately. Weigh the risks involved in each situation.

You, or someone in your party, must have a good knowledge of the local language or languages. If you do not speak the language, be sure to learn some key phrases such as foreign press, journalist, friend, various nationalities etc. Learn the local meaning of flags, signs, sound signals and gestures that could be important. Seek the advice of local authorities and residents about possible dangers.

Do not accompany or operate close to people carrying weapons without the explicit authorisation of your bureau chief or regional managing editor. Never carry a weapon or travel with journalists who do. Do not carry maps with markings that could be misconstrued. Be prudent in what you photograph or film. Seek the agreement of troops in the area before you take pictures. Always be conscious of the fact that troops may mistake camera equipment for weapons. Make every effort to demonstrate to them that you are not a threat. If you are unable to get agreement from troops before taking pictures, you must get authorisation from your bureau chief before proceeding, and must discuss with the bureau chief the safest way to get the pictures required. Carry identification, including a Reuters card, appropriate to the area where you are, unless being identified as a Reuters journalist would jeopardise your safety. If challenged, offer as much information about yourself as you can without compromising your safety. Never cross the line, or give the appearance of crossing the line, between the role of journalist as impartial observer and that of participant in a conflict. If working on both sides of a front line never give information to one side about military operations on the other side.

If caught in a situation where people are acting in a threatening manner, cocking their weapons and so on, try to stay relaxed and act friendly. Aggressive or nervous behaviour on your part is likely to be counter-productive. Carry cigarettes or other small luxuries you can use as an icebreaker.

Always wear civilian clothes unless accredited as a war correspondent and required to wear special dress. Use your judgment as to whether to dress to blend with the crowd or to be distinctively visible. In either case, avoid wearing military or paramilitary clothing. You should wear protective clothing such as a helmet and body armour in war zones as long as this does not increase the risks. You should also carry a gas mask and appropriate protective clothing if entering an area where there is a possibility that biological or chemical weapons may be used.

It is worth carrying the internationally recognised bracelet available with the caduceus symbol on one side and with space on the other on which to list your blood group and any allergies. The party you are travelling with should have a basic first-aid kit and a supply of sterile syringes.

Covering conflict and other stories of human suffering can be traumatic. Such reactions are normal and assistance is available through the Editorial Assistance Program or your local HR manager. Do not hesitate to seek this assistance if you think you would benefit. It will remain confidential.

Incidents Involving Reuters and its Staff

The internal reporting of serious incidents involving Reuters and its staff is an important part of any manager's job. The reporting of such incidents is essential to keep senior company officials up to date on situations that affect staff and operations or which have the potential to embarrass Reuters or affect the company's reputation. A report from one part of the world - on an attempted hoax, for example - can also provide an important tip-off to managers in another part of the world. We also need to be able to spot trends and take precautions if a pattern is discerned, instead of treating each "incident" as a once-off. Bureau chiefs, specialist editors and other managers with responsibilities for staff or news should familiarise themselves with the following guidelines:

When to file a report

An incident report must be filed when:

- Staff members are injured, killed, imperilled or harassed.
- Reuters is threatened with legal action as a result of a story or the behaviour of staff.
- Reuters withdraws a story, graphic, photograph or video.
- Reuters makes a mistake that adversely affects a customer (loses them money, for example) and/or prompts a large number of angry calls from clients.
- Reuters is the target of a hoax or an attempted hoax.
- Serious allegations of wrongdoing are levelled against our employees.
- Service is seriously disrupted to customers, due to natural or manmade causes or technical breakdowns.
- We are involved in an issue that has the potential to embarrass the company.
- Reuters is involved in an issue or a controversy that could result in an analyst's or a reporter's question to a company official.

The list above does not cover every eventuality. In general, err on the side of caution in making sure your supervisors are made aware of serious situations.

How to file a report

When a serious incident occurs, it makes sense to be in quick contact with your direct supervisor either by telephone or e-mail to discuss how to proceed. As soon as possible after that, you or your supervisor should file an incident report using the Corporate Incident Notification Site. You should update your report on that site until the matter is closed.

It is the responsibility of the managing editor in each region to make sure bureau chiefs or specialist editors in their regions are aware of relevant incidents in other parts of the world. Managing editors are also responsible for keeping a register of incidents and complaints in their regions. This

database will be maintained centrally.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 10:36, 2 December 2008.

Dealing with complaints

The Reuters reputation for getting it right and reporting it fairly is something we should be proud of, professionally and ethically. It is also a key part of attracting and keeping clients. Sometimes, however, we do get it wrong, and it is important for our reputation to fix it when we do. Responding promptly and properly to complaints that we have not been accurate, balanced or ethical can also avoid what could become costly legal problems, or widespread bad publicity. We also now increasingly deal with the public at large.

There is no one-size-fits-all process for handling complaints, but it should help us come closer to consistency if we all start from the same general principles. These guidelines should be combined with your knowledge of the specific situation and especially with the application of common sense every step of the way. In most cases that mix should be enough to keep molehills from becoming mountains, and to keep the genuine mountains from becoming impossible to conquer.

As an underlying principle, remember throughout the process of dealing with complaints that attitude counts. Getting mad or sounding overtly hostile may only make the person raising an issue more determined to press forward and less inclined to listen to what we have to say. It may help if you try to think of what you're hearing as feedback or constructive criticism, rather than simply a complaint.

First responses

If the issue is raised via telephone, the journalist picking up the call should record the essence of the matter and the particulars of the caller - name, title, company or group, and telephone number. Retain that information even if the problem seems to have been resolved in the course of the call. The caller could have second thoughts. Likewise save letters or e-mails related to complaints even if the matter appears settled. The bureau chief or top editorial manager of an operation should retain a central file of these records.

If you think you can deal with the complaint immediately yourself, do. For example, if a caller is saying you spelled her name wrong in a story you wrote, and you did, tell her it will be corrected, do the correction, and move on. If it's equally non-controversial but involves another journalist, put that person on the line to handle the caller. Remember that sometimes a reader or viewer just wants to offer his or her two cents of opinion, and is not expecting more than "thank you for your input" or some assurance their point of view will be taken into consideration next time around.

Some complaints may be general ones or clearly unrelated to your patch or powers. If you are sitting in Singapore and a reader calls to say he thinks Reuters coverage of the Middle East tilts too far in favour of the Israelis or Palestinians, your ability to do anything directly yourself is minimal. In such cases point the reader to editor@reuters.com, any e-mails to which will be read by a senior editor.

Not all complaints are that simple, of course. They may involve subjective judgments about whether a story was one-sided, disputes about facts that will take some checking, or claims of libel or other legal issues. There may be requests to substantially change content or withdraw a story, or a

complainant may come back a second time to say the action you had taken was not good enough and demand something further. Any of these justifies escalation. In such cases, politely inform the person who raised the issue that you need to discuss it with other staff and someone will be back in touch. Then follow through by advising a senior staffer (e.g., section chief, desk editor, EIC or bureau chief) of the details. And don't forget that promise to get back to the complainant, even if only to advise that the matter is still under consideration if it appears it will take some time to decide on a course of action. In general, the medium of response should mirror the medium of the complaint (phone calls for phone calls, emails for emails, etc.). Centres that get many comments that do not necessarily require an individually tailored response may consider developing a form letter (e.g., *see the example at the end of this section of what goes to those who e-mail via reuters.com).

Further steps

The same principles of common sense apply if an issue has been passed on and up. A bureau chief, for example, may feel complaints of political bias are unjustified, politely tell unhappy members of a pressure group why, and that may be the end of that. Double-checking and exploration of additional references may clarify who is wrong and who is right on a factual issue and if it is us, a correction may be issued that puts the matter to rest. Again, the complaining party should be advised, generally by the same medium he or she used, of our decision. If the medium is the telephone, notes or a tape should be kept. Then again, we may feel charges of bias are unjustified, but they come from a government department which does not want to take no for an answer and makes noises about cutting off our reporters' access if we do not put out a reworked story. A client company may couple a demand to withdraw an analysis they dislike with a threat to cancel all their contracts with Reuters if we do not. Anyone (whether an individual or a company) named in a story they think libelled them may be determined to sue whether there is a correction or not. Analyze the situation and consider who else in Reuters needs to be told about the problem, either because it could affect them or because they may be able to help you.

For example: In the case of the government department, senior editors should know that there could be an impact on our coverage access, and potentially other consequences that may have an impact on our operations and staff. They might also be in a position to do some lobbying (or bring in the Reuters professionals who do that) to bring the bureaucrats to their senses.

In the case of the client company, while keeping in mind the need for editorial independence to be maintained marketing and sales executives should be advised so they can prepare for the possible problem, and perhaps when they understand editorial's reasoned views be able to use their own good contacts to get the company to reconsider.

In the case of any threat to sue, the Reuters in-house legal department should be contacted immediately for legal advice, and senior editorial managers made aware that there is an issue that could mean significant financial costs and possible negative publicity. For the latter reason our public relations people should also know, and may have useful advice. If unsure about consulting or escalating, lean on the side of doing so, and always consult promptly with counsel if there appears to be a serious threat of legal action. And in today's world, no explicit or implicit threat of physical action from an unhappy individual or group should be taken lightly either.

Any of the hypothetical examples mentioned above (but not run-of-the-mill corrections) would qualify for inclusion in an editorial incident report. The company has a global internal process for the electronic logging of serious incidents, which the examples in this section would probably require. This is a task for managers, who should be familiar with the guidance in the section of this Handbook, DEALING WITH THREATS, DANGEROUS SITUATIONS AND INCIDENTS INVOLVING REUTERS OR ITS STAFF

reuters.com response:

Thank you for contacting Reuters. We value your feedback. Your comments have been passed to our editorial team for review. We receive many hundreds of e-mails each week and it is not possible to send individual replies. But we do welcome views on how we could improve our news coverage and all correspondence is read by a senior editor. In fact we often spot and correct errors faster with the help of sharp-eyed readers. Once again, thank you for taking the time to contact us.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 15:18, 1 July 2008.

Attention Editor items and Hoaxes

Contents

- 1 Attention Editor Items
  - 1.1 Bankruptcy stories
  - 1.2 Civil lawsuits
  - 1.3 Contentious claims, allegations of wrongdoing and vituperative attacks
  - 1.4 Graphic details, obscenities and blasphemy
  - 1.5 Legally dangerous material
  - 1.6 Reuters
  - 1.7 Scientific and medical breakthroughs and other sensational stories
  - 1.8 Withdrawals
- 2 Hoaxes

Attention Editor Items

Reuters reporters and sub-editors need to be keenly aware of potential legal dangers - not only because legal problems could damage the company and its reputation, but because of our underlying commitment to fairness and balance. A story that can be challenged in court may not necessarily be defamatory, but it may well be considered to be biased, unbalanced or unfair. Journalists need to be familiar with the LEGAL DANGERS guidelines. Bureaus should send potentially risky stories to the relevant desk with the words ATTENTION EDITOR in the slug and an accompanying message explaining the risks. Such stories should be handled by a regional specialist editor or the senior desk editor on duty, with reference to in-house or external lawyers if required.

The following are examples of the sort of stories that may need to be sent ATTENTION EDITOR. It is not an exhaustive list. Err on the side of caution if you have any concerns about the legality of a story, about issues of taste, balance or fairness or about the good name and reputation of Reuters. Specific guidance on how to treat images that may raise legal concerns or other issues of risk are dealt with in Section II of this Handbook.

Bankruptcy stories

Bankruptcy stories should be slugged ATTENTION EDITOR. Be very careful when using adjectives to describe a company. A company becomes formally bankrupt or insolvent when a court rules it is unable to meet its debts. The ruling may be sought either by the company concerned (voluntary) or by creditors. Any story about a potential bankruptcy report from a third party must contain comment from the company concerned or at the very least an indication of serious efforts to seek that comment if unavailable.

In England and some other countries the court appoints an official receiver to manage and eventually realise the debtor's assets on behalf of the creditors. Terms such as bankruptcy, insolvency and liquidation have different legal meanings in different countries. Be precise in the

application of those terms and offer succinct, clear definitions where necessary.

Be as precise as possible in reporting what a company or court says, especially if a translation is involved. For example, in France the normal form of bankruptcy is faillite; the term banqueroute refers to fraudulent bankruptcy. The danger if they are confused is obvious.

A company or individual in the United States is typically designated bankrupt when a court enters an order for relief in either a Chapter 11 or Chapter 7 case. They may become bankrupt by virtue of a voluntary filing on their own behalf or an involuntary filing by a required number of creditors.

Applications made under bankruptcy rules may be technical manoeuvres and could lead to libel actions if misinterpreted. Business collapses are often progressive rather than sudden. Over-colourful reporting that implies the situation is hopeless may lead to legal trouble if the company recovers and claims the reports were false and damaging.

Civil lawsuits

A grave risk exists in reporting threats by an individual, company or organisation to file a lawsuit against another party. In determining whether or not these warrant coverage, we must consider the possible motive of the source and whether we are being used to exert pressure on the other party to reach an out-of-court settlement, thus exposing ourselves to charges of bias and manipulation.

In general, we should avoid reporting a threat of a lawsuit unless one or both parties are sufficiently high profile and the case is sufficiently market moving for us to consider coverage. When this is the case, the story should be filed ATTENTION EDITOR for a decision by a regional specialist editor or deputy on whether it should run. Any story about a lawsuit threatened or real must include comment from both parties. If comment is not immediately available from one party and there is an overriding news reason to run the story, it must make clear what efforts were made to reach the party e.g. "A spokesman for Company X did not respond to two voicemail messages seeking comment."

Contentious claims, allegations of wrongdoing and vituperative attacks

We can never allow our sources to make allegations, contentious statements or vituperative attacks behind a cloak of anonymity. It weakens our credibility and gives the sources an opportunity to benefit at our expense. It is fundamentally unfair to the other party and thus biased.

If quoting unnamed sources on one side of a conflict about what is happening on the other side, use them only for facts, not opinions. If a source wants to make a vituperative attack on an individual, organisation, company or country he or she must speak on the record. We may waive this rule only if the source is a senior official making a considered policy statement which is obviously newsworthy. A story must make clear both that the informant has volunteered the information and that he or she is an official. If the person will not speak on that basis we should not use the story. Such a story might begin: "Gaul accused Rome on Wednesday of practicing genocide against its ethnic minorities." The second paragraph would then read something like this: "In news briefing a government official, who declined to be identified, said..."

Even when we have named sources, any story accusing a person or entity of wrongdoing, potentially holding them up to public ridicule or disgrace or accusing them of illicit or immoral activities should be filed ATTENTION EDITOR and must normally carry comment from the other party.

Graphic details, obscenities and blasphemy

As journalists, we have an obligation to convey the reality of what we report accurately, yet a duty to be aware that such material can cause distress, damage the dignity of the individuals concerned or even in some cases so overpower the viewer or reader that a rational understanding of the facts is impaired. We do not sanitise violence, bowdlerise speech or euphemise sex. We should not, however, publish graphic details and obscene or blasphemous language gratuitously or with an intention to titillate or to shock. There must be a valid news reason for running such material and it will usually require a decision by a senior editor. In all cases, we need to consider whether the material is necessary to an understanding of the reality portrayed or described. We should also be mindful that our customers in different markets often have different thresholds and needs. All such stories should be sent ATTENTION EDITOR with an accompanying explanation of why the material has been used. Such material, if published, should be brought to the attention of readers in brackets at the top of the story e.g. (Note strong language in paragraph 6) or (This story contains graphic details in paragraphs 7, 9, 12-14). We spell out expletives. It is then the responsibility of online desks pushing news directly to consumers to deal with the copy appropriately.

Legally dangerous material

Journalists should be familiar with the general principles of libel, defamation and privacy rights and with the specific laws that apply in the countries where they operate, including with regard to any provisions of censorship, other reporting restrictions and official secrets.

Because of the potential risk of legal action against Reuters and its staff, restrictions on our operations or even expulsion in some countries, any story that may be legally dangerous should be filed ATTENTION EDITOR.The intention here is not to limit our ability to report the news. It is simply that the decision to publish, and if necessary be damned, needs to be taken by a senior editor, including in consultation with lawyers if required.

Reuters

Any story about Reuters, its staff or its operations should be filed ATTENTION EDITOR. It should normally be written by the senior journalist in the bureau or on the reporting unit and must be cleared for publication by the relevant regional specialist editor. We should seek comment from an authorised company spokesman, who should also be made aware in case of press enquiries.

Scientific and medical breakthroughs and other sensational stories

Stories about major scientific discoveries or medical breakthroughs should be handled with the utmost care, normally by a specialist correspondent or by working with a specialist. If that is not possible, they should be filed ATTENTION EDITOR. Such stories must come from a reputable named source and should be checked with experts for verification. A specialist correspondent is usually best placed to judge the importance and reliability of such stories. Many medical or drug studies are vitally important for investors, and investors in the healthcare sector often have high levels of expertise about the process behind medical trials and regulatory approvals for drugs or other treatments.

Reports of human cloning, a cure for AIDS or the discovery of life on Mars not only play on human emotions but also can expose Reuters to ridicule and damage our reputation if they are wrong. Similarly, we need to be sceptical about sensational stories along the lines of babies born with three heads, miracle apparitions and similar "tall tales". These often prove to be spoofs but it is tempting to report them as brights. If in doubt, consult and if you report them, send them ATTENTION EDITOR.

Withdrawals

Any story that has to be withdrawn for any reason should be filed ATTENTION EDITOR with an explanation.

Hoaxes

Do not use news until you are certain of its authenticity. Guard against hoax attempts by being suspicious and checking sources. Would-be hoaxers know screen services have an immediate impact on investments.

Most hoax attempts can be parried by this drill:

- Regard all information you receive by telephone as suspect unless you know the caller. If you do not know the caller, ask for the person's full name, title and telephone number. Rather than take it for granted that the name and number are authentic, check such details independently though an organisation's or company's switchboard, online searches and other journalistic means.
- Telephone the person back. Get confirmation that it was indeed that person who telephoned you.
- Use the same precautions with unsolicited material received by e-mail, fax, instant message, other electronic means, SMS or in the mail.
- Be on guard against April Fool hoaxes on or around April 1 and all fantasies such as the birth of five-legged sheep, human pregnancies lasting 18 months, the marriage of 100-year-old sweethearts, perfect bridge hands and miracles.

- Follow the checking procedure even if it means delaying a story until you are sure of its accuracy.
- Use nothing found on the Internet, even from what appears to be a genuine corporate or institutional site, that is not sourced in a way that you can verify. Many corporate announcements and much economic data are now released online. Reporters need to be familiar with how news sources in their areas of expertise distribute information. Be suspicious of online information that is a complete surprise or appears in an unexpected place. Ask yourself if this is how an organisation normally delivers news? If in doubt confirm information by telephone or other means before you publish it. Capture, save and print a copy of a "screenshot" of the web page in question in order to defend us against charges of printing nonexistent information. If you do not know how to capture a screenshot, ask anyone with a technical bent to show you how.
- We have no greater protection if we pick up a hoax from a newspaper, a broadcaster or any other third party news organisation. The damage to our reputation from running a hoax is the same and in many jurisdictions we are just as liable under the law.

Category: Specialised Guidance

This page was last modified 15:18, 1 July 2008.

Reporting from the internet

This page was last modified 20:53, 16 February 2012.